DELORAINE.

VOL. I.

DELORAINE.

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Why that bosom gored?
Why dimly gleams the visionary sword?

POPE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

THE plan of the following story in its rude outline was first committed to paper on the seventeenth of January 1830. I had just concluded the composition of Cloudesley. The Great Unknown, as he had for years been denominated, had sufficiently shewn that it was not absolutely necessary for the mind of an author to lie fallow for years, between the conclusion of one work of fiction and the commencement of another. And, old as I was, and

little as it might become me in other respects to put forward a comparison between myself and the writer now recently deceased, I felt an ambition to shew that I upon occasion could be no less unintermitted in the invention of a narrative. The circumstances that compelled me to lay aside the undertaking for a time, are such as it would be impertinent in me to intrude upon my readers. Suffice it to say that, after an interval of many months, I was induced, with no mixture of irresoluteness, and, as I would hope, with no flagging wing, to resume my task.

December, 1832.

DELORAINE.

CHAPTER I.

MY father was an English gentleman with an estate of three thousand pounds a year. I was his only son. I was brought up with every imaginable indulgence. My wishes were anticipated. Every gratification was procured for me, that by any chance might make my days pass in cheerfulness and joy. Yet I was not utterly spoiled. I had a tutor, the most amiable and exemplary of men. His plan was to teach me, by making the things it was

intended I should learn interesting to me. He was an excellent mathematician. He had a most discriminating taste in poetry, history, and fine writing of every kind. Add to this, that he was penetrated with the deepest enthusiasm. He had a voice, musical and silver-toned: he had an eye that varied to every sentiment that passed within him, and that impressed all these sentiments in succession upon the bottom of my heart. I learned, because I desired to learn. The beauties of Virgil and Horace and Homer were unfolded before me by the skill and susceptibility of my tutor. I did not learn the construction and the language first, and afterwards come to discern the merits of the author I read. My instructor, when he opened the first page of the book I perused, taught me to feel its excellence. His enthusiasm became mine: and all which is trying, harsh and repulsive in the common modes of education, was in my

case turned into delight. It scarcely ever happened that the summons which announced the hour of study sounded harshly in my ear: on the contrary I obeyed it with the same alacrity, with which other boys listen to the summons that calls them to scenes of sport and recreation.

In the midst of gratifications and peace like this I passed the early years of my life. I am now the most forlorn and odious of men. All the pleasures of life have at length deserted me; and every calamity and misery is heaped on my head. I have no friend; or only one, whom the ties of nature and her own excellent dispositions have rendered mine by bonds never to be dissolved. Like Cain, I have a mark trenched in my forehead, that all men should shrink from me. I sit alone; for no one will come near me, no one will endure me. Seldom do I go out from my apartment; seldom does the fresh air of heaven breathe upon me; and

that only in the darkest night, when even all the stars are wrapt in impenetrable gloom. Oh, how deep is my remorse! how unvaried and endless are the days and nights that succeed each other in my desperate existence! But I am wrong to say, unvaried. The variety is endless; but the change is only of misery. My life is spent in eternal alarms. I cannot call an hour my own; for the next hour may render me up to the vengeance that my crimes have so amply deserved.

But all that I am here stating is disjointed and abrupt. The feeling of what I am, confounds and overwhelms the recollection of what I had to say. I must conquer myself. I must beat down and trample under foot this devil that for ever rises before me, and will let me see nought but himself. I have sat down with a determination to record the fortunes of my life; and the task shall be performed.

I have said that I passed in all right dispo-

sitions and all happiness the period of my boyhood. But I did much more. I lived from the day of my birth to the day in which I completed the fortieth year of my age—it were ludicrous to say—in a state of enjoyment that kings might have envied. Kings cannot know felicity like mine. They have the cares of empire. They are placed in an unnatural situation. They are seated on an eminence, that the shafts of ill fortune may strike them the more surely. A king has neither brother, nor genuine associate. The "favourite" of high fortune "has no friend." He knows no sympathy: he stands alone in the world.

But I was placed in all seeming security. My situation in life was like that of the obscure and sequestered valley. A thousand storms might brew in the skies above; contending tempests and hurricanes might sweep from point to point among the mountains: but from my sheltered nook I looked up, and

smiled at the impotent tumult and fury of the elemental war.

Every day that I live, I think of the quiet and beautiful stream of my former years. More than half the period ordinarily assigned for the longest term of human existence I passed in blameless tranquillity. Why, before the scene thus became changed upon me, did not I cease to exist! Many of the most illustrious characters recorded on the page of history died without having reached the age I have mentioned. Alexander the Great deceased in the thirty-second year of his age. The author of our holy religion dwelt in this vale of tears for about the same interval.

What a thing is character, honour, or virtue! I passed through all the ordinary relations of human life unblamed. I have been a good son, a good husband, and a good father. My friendships were warm and sincere; my enmities temperate and placable. My tongue

was ever at the service of the honest and the generous cause; my purse was ever open to the claims of the distressed. How many tears of earnest sorrow have I shed over the calamities of the deserving! How sincerely have I pitied and allowed for the faults, even the crimes, of those who were strongly tempted into the paths of error! If I had died then, those who loved me might have turned over the most copious collection of epitaphs, have selected the one that was most panegyrical, and with unblushing front have inscribed it upon my tomb.

I have often compared my case with that of the emperor Tiberius. He did not arrive at the empire, till he was far descending from the vigour and flower of human existence. He was an able statesman, and an accomplished warrior. He was courteous in his demeanour, and considerate in his conduct. The very steadiness and moderation of his temper won for him uni-

versal confidence and applause. It might be said of him, as the Roman historian has said of another emperor, that, if he had never mounted the throne, all men would have judged he deserved it. What he was, when he became possessed of absolute power, is emblazoned in the imperishable records of history.

I have described the period of my boyhood. When I said, that I was brought up with every imaginable indulgence, that every gratification was anxiously procured for me, and that I had a tutor the most amiable and exemplary of men, in making this enumeration I have recorded the character of my father. He discharged every duty towards me that arises out of the important relation in which we stood to each other; and he regarded me with the fondest partiality. It is no foolish pampering of my vanity and selfishness, when I say, covered as I now am with wretchedness and disgrace, that I deserved his love, that he saw in me

every thing that could most gratify his parental anxiety. My understanding was of no common order; my taste was pure, vivid and refined; my application and learning worthy of the education I had received; and my dispositions noble and generous, full of affection, and formed for the reception and cultivation of friendship.

When I had reached a suitable age, I was introduced into parliament, an honour which had been commanded by my father before me, but from which he had afterwards retired. Previously to this occurrence, I had not been without such a circle of connections and friends, as might best contribute to my enjoyment and advantage. I had visited several of the courts of Europe, and endeavoured to store my mind with such observations and experience, as might best qualify me for the offices of a senator.

But it was not till I set up an establishment in London, and was regularly engaged in my

parliamentary functions, that I in the strictest sense became a member of the fashionable world. I was two-and-twenty years of age. My figure was prepossessing; my countenance procured me general favour and acceptance; and my speech was musical and impressive. I possessed in full measure the ordinary accomplishments of a gentleman. My address was happy; and I rarely wanted the presence of mind, or the flow of words, to do justice to my conceptions. My intellect was stored with copious information; I had read, I had seen, I had reflected on all that could best enable me to do justice to myself in whatever concurrence of circumstances I might be placed. My judgement, so far as it had yet been tried, was sound; my penetration considerable; and I had those powers of imagination, that could best make the future present to my thoughts, enable me to enter into the condition and feelings of others, and qualify me to adorn my

own remarks, or my share in general conversation, with such animated pictures, and such happiness of illustration, as might send away those whose circles I frequented with pleasing recollections, and embalmed my name with an agreeable odour.—I have no gratification in putting down these reminiscences. I am composing the record of one who, in every valuable sense of the word, is already deceased.

It was in the circles of fashionable life that I first met with the beautiful Emilia Fitzcharles, by whose appearance I was immediately captivated, and whom in no long time I made my wife. It is to say little, to affirm that she was superlatively handsome; though the soft brilliancy of her eye, the fairness of her brow, and the fresh morning roses that glowed in her cheek, were such as I never saw equalled in any other of her sex. There was something in the simplest of her attitudes, that expressed a being just descended from the celestial spheres,

new lighted on the earth. The charm lay principally in that very simplicity, the total absence of all design, and even of consciousness. Her soul shone through her corporeal frame, composed her limbs, and gave them an air and a grace, which, if you saw it, you would easily apprehend, but which no imagination, no power of the inventive faculties, could parallel. She was all a miracle. When she looked at you, her eyes were fraught with intelligence, combined with a benignity that was more than human. You could scarcely have the audacity to accost her—not that there was any thing in what you saw, that was proud, imposing, forbidding,—she was the gentlest of her sex,—it was her perfection, her faultlessness, that awed you. It was, so to express myself, her attraction, her frankness, her unreserve, that kept you at a distance. It was like what I have remarked at one point, of the waters of the Tweed: you have but to step over a brook,

and you are at once in a new country, and under the rule of another government. The thought itself must give you pause. The step is decisive, and may be incapable of being revoked. It is thus that it is related of Mary queen of Scots, when she had already urged her horse into the stream that she might seek the protection of Elizabeth, that one of her faithful counsellors followed her, seized the bridle of the steed, and endeavoured at the latest moment to convince her of the portentous results that might attend her proceeding.

My first acquaintance with Emilia was made in London, and in the brilliant circles of fashion. But this introduction was speedily succeeded by an opportunity to see her under a different aspect, and to observe her qualities, and the inestimable treasures of her head and her heart, more fully than I could otherwise have done, in a rural retreat. As the summer advanced, a friend of mine, a brother member of the house

of commons, invited me to spend some days at a country-seat he possessed in the neighbourhood of that of the father of Emilia. I was secretly charmed with so fortunate a coincidence. I had often been delighted with the society of this friend; our views of life and literature for the most part coincided; and there was a liveliness in his wit, and an originality in his remarks, that gave a nameless grace to his conversation. But this was not the principal cause why upon this occasion I accepted his invitation with so much eagerness. His residence was at only seven miles distance from that of Fitzcharles.

The first morning after our arrival, we rode over to pay our respects to the amiable old man and his interesting daughter. The road lay partly through the park of a nobleman, the wealthiest land-proprietor in the county, the surface of which was beautifully variegated with hill and valley, with forest-trees and under-

wood, which a fresh and limpid river divided into two unequal parts, over which we passed by a bridge: and, when we quitted the park, the rest of our way lay for the most part through an avenue of lofty trees, whose branches nearly united, and formed a continuous canopy over our heads, now and then broken by an unexpected vista to the neighbouring country.

Our ride was delightful; and the thought of the point in which it was to terminate, rendered it doubly interesting to me. The old man and his daughter were at home and alone; and he insisted on our staying to dine. We accordingly dismissed one of our servants, to announce to my friend's household that we should not return till late in the evening. Another neighbour of Fitzcharles dropped in soon after, and joined us. We strolled about the grounds; and occasionally reposed ourselves in the alcoves with which the gardens were interspersed. Whether by accident or

otherwise, the three gentlemen who were in a manner at home in the scene, kept together, and canvassed their rural politics, the agricultural and other improvements they contemplated, and the little anecdotes of the neighbourhood, while Emilia and I were left to amuse each other as we could.

Here, amidst the calm and serene scenery of nature, she appeared to me a new creature. In the ball and the drawing-room she outshone all her competitors; she sparkled with diamonds; and the taste and elegance of her attire pointedly distinguished her, at least in my eye, from the crowd of females of fashion and beauty that surrounded her. Her motions were more graceful, her voice of a more happy and heartfelt intonation, and her remarks infinitely more striking and agreeable than any thing I could observe in the ladies that were then most in vogue.

But it was a totally different, and a much

more enchanting scene, to behold her with all the wealth, and yet all the sobriety of nature, so to speak, for a back-ground. She adorned the most exalted and the noblest circles. By the resistless character of her charms she extinguished all the lesser stars that sought to contend with her. But amidst the woods and the groves the whole was infinitely more gratifying. Here there was no contention. It was all harmony, and the parts of the picture seemed to belong to each other. Nature united with Emilia; and Emilia united with all that was most ravishing or most tender in the objects of nature. In the ball-room all was rivalry; a struggle, however ineffectual in the rest, for superiority; and the spectator could not avoid the having, as it were, copied into his soul, the uneasy sensations, the heart-burnings and the envy, that prevailed around him. But with Emilia, among parterres of flowers and majestic trees, while the light and

fleecy clouds floated along in a thousand fantastic, yet graceful forms and in all their stainless freshness over our heads, I felt that every thing within and around me emanated from one sacred and ineffable source, "whose body Nature is, and God the soul."

The day appeared too short; and I started with surprise when my friend told me it was time for us to take our departure. A few days after, my host set out for a meeting of country-gentlemen upon some affair of local interest. We called in our way at the house of Fitz-charles; and, as I had no concern with the meeting that was to take place, I contrived to remain with Emilia, while the two gentlemen proceeded to their place of appointment. Emilia had now a female cousin with her on a visit, a kind, good creature, whose presence gave decorum to our colloquy, and who, like Celia in As You Like It, being herself characterized by the absence of egotism and pretensions,

suffered no pain from my almost exclusive attention to her charming relative.

Fitzcharles remarked the partiality that was taking root between me and his daughter, and was not unwilling to favour it. He invited me, when the term of my visit to my present host was completed, to come and favour him for an equal period with a residence under his roof. I loved his frankness; we understood each other without further explanation. There was no contract or precise anticipation between us. Each party was free; and, on that account, the silken cords of ingenuous passion sat a thousand times more lightly upon me; and I was only the more happy, because there was no possibility that, in hours of gloom, and in the necessarily variable weather of human life, I could ever have occasion to look back to a liberty I had too suddenly parted with, or too hastily compromised. I might repent, if I pleased; I might withdraw, with-

out slur to the nicety of my reputation, and without giving to any one a right to complain; and that very circumstance effectually barred the door against so much as the thought to repent.

The eligibleness of the match, and the integrity of my character, freed us from even the forms of restraint. We wandered wherever we pleased. We found ourselves sometimes in the most impervious thickets and recesses, which we had plunged into without the slightest premeditation. The scene had to me the recommendation of entire novelty. I had never before been in unreserved communication with an accomplished female of my own age. All the topics of conversation, all the thoughts that pass through the mind, are in that case entirely different from those which occur with a friend of our own sex. With a male friend each party has his own pretensions, is careful to maintain his ground, and feels a rivalship

even in the midst of the most entire apparent reciprocity. There is a jealousy; each party lays down the law, the law of his own mind, takes care that there is a clear stage, and summons his faculties to enable him to render the justice due to his case; even when he listens to his friend, when he attends with deference, and is grateful for the light he receives, still he thinks of himself, is anxious that he should not be found in the act of betraying the clearness and independence of his understanding, and in the warmest paroxysms of amity remembers that he and the partner of his heart are distinct beings.

In the graver and more sentimental communications of man and man the head still bears the superior sway; in the unreserved intimacies of man and woman the heart is ever uppermost. Feeling is the main thing; and judgment passes for little. We go immediately to the point, not whether this thing

or that thing is true, but how do you like this thing or that, what pulse of approbation or disapprobation, of delight, of emotion, or sympathy, does it rouse in your bosom? If I and my male friend agree in a certain opinion, it is well; I feel so much the more kindly towards him, so much more gratification in our acquaintance. Still however we are two. But, with a female, and that female the object of my growing partiality and preference, every new agreement of sentiment and approbation brings us nearer to each other, removes one more brick from the wall which originally separated us, dissolves our several identities, and, as it were, melts us, like different chemical substances, in one crucible, and mingles us in heart and spirit, with a feeling that we can never thereafter be divided.

Between man and woman in matters of affection, there is no rivalry, no competition. We are two different species of being; or at

least the distinction of sex divides us no less effectually. I should no more think of a contention of this sort with the woman of my heart, than with a being of the animal creation below me, or with my guardian angel above me. With my male friend I still stand upon my defence; I reserve a corner in my heart, that is sacredly and exclusively my own. But with the female I love it is otherwise; I throw open the gates of the citadel, and lay the keys of the fortress at her feet. I never have the imagination that we can have separate interests; and I invite her to enter into my soul, and to possess the "crown and hearted throne of my love." We are truly united; she is "bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh;" and for this obvious cause "shall a man leave father and mother," comparatively estrange him from all other living things, "and cleave to his wife."

We married; and, if ever man was happy

in the wedded state, I was so. But all the pleasures I afterwards experienced, never had the power to obliterate my vivid remembrance of the days of courtship. Hope is in some respects a thing more brilliant, more vivifying, than fruition. What we have looked forward to with eager and earnest aspiration, is never in all respects equal to the picture we had formed of it. The very uncertainty enhances the enjoyment. Rest is not the natural, the most elevated state of man. As virtue, so happiness, consists in action, in a perpetual progress towards that which we have not. Love acquires an additional principle of gratification from the uncertainty of its climate, its smiles, its frowns, *inimicitiæ, induciæ, bellum, pax rursum,* "its little quarrels, its subsequent capitulation, its brief hostilities, and their never-failing attendant and follower, peace." We are not satisfied with a climate of unvaried sunshine. When the zephyr plays, and the branches

are moved, and light summer-clouds flit along the sky, we experience a more entire, an ever-renewing gratification. The very uncertainty, the thought, "Here it may all break off, and be at an end," imparts a tingling delight, a life that shoots through all my veins. It is like the flickering of a lamp that guides us in an untried path; it seems dying, but to revive again; and, when hope most appears to have deserted us, lo, it suddenly bursts forth with a brightness that we think will never more subside and be extinguished.

The imperfection of the state of courtship is its perfection. We have always something to look forward to. However extatic may be my present state of enjoyment, there is still better behind. The prospect, the comparison of the present and the future, "when we shall hunger and thirst no more," gives to the soul a peace that no words can describe.

Courtship is a holy state. In the midst of

temptation we are chaste. We put a bridle into the mouth of passion, and no incorrect motion or gesture, no word but of entire purity and delicacy, escapes the lover. We feel this sanctity, and are fully aware of the robe of honour with which it invests us. As our words, so also we turn our thoughts and the topics on which we discourse, to refined and elevated themes. We feel how widely we are removed from the "beasts that perish," and how we approach to the sublimity of an angelic essence.

Yet all this would have been nothing but in such a courtship as mine. Not for one moment did I doubt of the rectitude of mind, the generosity of spirit, of my Emilia. I knew that all was right in the ultimate result. Had the case been that of a waywardness of purpose, a capriciousness of determination, a thought that loved to tyrannise, and delighted in the anxiety and affliction of her lover, our position would have been different. But, no. Her course

was like that of the orb by which the world is enlightened. Though the clouds might gather, and the heaven be obscured for a moment, yet I knew that the cherisher of my soul was in essence unaltered, and that its beneficence would presently shew itself with only the more advantage for this transitory interruption. The sensitiveness of a lover indeed from time to time taught me to be afraid; but, when I had leisure to recollect all the kindness and loveliness of her nature, my tranquillity once more was restored, and I became full of reliance.

We married; and, if ever man was happy in the wedded state, I was so. As we knew more of each other, we had fewer topics and occasions of difference. We were united by the most sacred ties; and the cultivation of a mutual harmony was a sort of religion to both. In courtship nothing is to be considered as con-

cluded; we play with a knot, the plications of which are shaped out, but the bows are not yet drawn into the form in which they are destined to remain in perpetuity. Courtship is a sort of sport:

> My Phyllis me with pelted apples plies:
> Then, tripping to the woods, the coy one hies,
> And wishes to be seen before she flies.

Courtship is an experiment; it is the month which the stripling spends "upon liking" previously to his indentures. He is yet free, and may be disposed of elsewhere. And the liberty of which he feels he is the possessor, unavoidably gives birth to a thousand freaks and sallies, and unbridled imaginations. "Why should I not," says the lover, of the fair one he addresses, "use my freedom, for the short time that it remains to me? The use of it may be the means of mortal offence. But I will take my chance. If I give in, the moment the thing

becomes serious, I trust that all will be well. Even though the mischief should not be instantaneously healed, I can humble myself, and exhibit the tokens of a sincere penitence; and that must be enough."

CHAPTER II.

No society is comparable to that of an accomplished wife: at least such I found it in the engagement into which I thus entered in my early period of man's estate. Our topics of conversation were inexhaustible; for we were wholly without reserve, and conversed with each other, even as a man might be supposed to commune with his own heart. We told all that we knew; for neither of us had any thing that we desired to possess exclusively. Every portion of information of which either came into possession, we were forward to impart. Every subtle distinction of sentiment, every nice division of meaning, every use of the words

and phrases of our native tongue that would enable us to give appropriate language and luminous expression to what before existed in the mind undeveloped and only in the ruder elements of thought, we were eager to add to the common stock, and make a property for both.

Nothing is more beautiful than the relation of tutor and pupil, where love adds its zest to the intercourse. The true delight which the instructor feels in developing what else might be obscure, the pleasure which he reaps in finding his meaning thoroughly apprehended, and in the docility of the novice, and the ingenuous enquiries that are addressed to him in return, are all and each of them sensations in the highest degree gratifying.

We talked together in the usual apartment of our house, which overlooked the lawn, and the slopes, and the gay parterres of a thousand flowers: or we walked in sequestered and solitary lanes, on the margins of the running stream, or on the uplands where a de-

licious prospect unfolded itself to our view. The freshness of the air, the singing of birds, the fragrance of the morning, the whispering of the breeze, or the gorgeous colours of the departing luminary of day, gave a healthful tone to all our communications, and to the effusion of our souls. We were not without neighbours, and the interchange of agreeable society. But our own society unbroken in upon, pleased us most, when our guests had withdrawn, or when we felt secure that no third person by his appearance would diversify the scene, and by enlarging, give a comparative restraint to our unstudied and spontaneous interchanges of sentiment. Other men, better informed on certain points than myself, might visit our retreat; but Emilia preferred learning whatever she was not yet fully acquainted with, from my lips, who,

she knew, would intermix
Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute

Occasionally we separated. Business relating to the affairs of the neighbourhood, to the administration of my landed property, to the wants and desires of my tenants, would call me from home. In the conduct of every domestic establishment the departments of the husband and the wife are different; her affairs are partly those of housewifery, while the male superintendant of their common interests does not fully discharge his duties, unless he is in some sense his own steward, and refuses to delegate all his authority to another. But these separations only gave to our subsequent meetings a further charm, and imparted to what might otherwise have had a cloying monotony, a provoking and spirit-stirring novelty. After every separation our meeting again was like that of friends whom lands and seas had divided from each other: we came together with impatience, and felt as creatures that had escaped from an odious banishment, and re-

turned once more to the enjoyment of all that they had loved best in the world.

I was never alone, but when I wished to be alone. Solitude gave new charms to society, and society to solitude. I was secure not to be exposed to a satiety of either. There are occupations that can be most satisfactorily and most effectually pursued in solitude. In the ever-varying landscape of human life solitude has sometimes its charms that nothing else can countervail. Hers is the province of deep meditation, of profound self-examination, of looking steadily into the "seeds of things," and weighing the universe in a balance, of winnowing the abstruse questions which present themselves concerning good and evil, the respective advantages of enthusiasm and apathy, and the respective probabilities that attend on "happiness or final misery." Hers is the realm of criticism. And, to conclude, hers is emphatically the consecrated ground of the

sublime, the silent, the abstract, the concentred religion. But my periods of solitude were a thousandfold the more satisfactory, inasmuch as I could, whenever it so pleased me, open the door of my retreat, and immediately engage myself in the society and converse that I loved best. In the next apartment, or at the end of an adjoining gallery, I found waiting for me the most perfect specimen of female excellence that ever existed, welcoming me, smiling upon me with her beautiful eyes, anxiously enquiring for my health and my peace, imparting to me tranquillity and cheerfulness when my thoughts had been too grave, suggesting amusements when I had grown weary from severe application, and, by some ingenious sally, or happily recollected anecdote or tale, bringing me back to myself, and rendering me as fresh and ready for any purpose that might be started, as if I had just awaked from the most balmy slumbers.

Solitude is one of the highest enjoyments of which our nature is susceptible. Solitude is also, when too long continued, capable of being made the most severe, indescribable, unendurable source of anguish. But I was in no danger of ever having too much of it, or that the Goddess would ever approach me, clad in her Gorgon terrors, and circled with the wild, formless, terrific, maddening images she is capable of conjuring up in the soul. The intellectual climate in which I dwelt was not for ever perhaps serene; but I could call up a cerulean canopy and horizon, whenever I pleased; I had a sun that rose upon me at any moment, at which I wished for the newness and freshness of a delightful morning. It is much at all times to have access to society, but more to have within call the best society that the great Creator in his bounty ever assigned to the lot of a human being.

If at any time I was, as it were, ready to

sink and give way under the anxieties, the obscurity, the never-ending weariness of my progress "through the valley of the shadow of death," I had, to adopt the language of the most sacred of records, "an angel from heaven appearing to me, strengthening me." I imbibed new vigour from the beams of her affectionate countenance, and new animation from the accents of her melodious speech. If I fainted by reason of infirmity or over-earnest application, the balm of her sympathy and love was at hand to restore me. Her soul was purity; her suggestions infallible. I had a petitioner, through the medium of whose voice and eyes, all charity was wakened up in my bosom; and I became worthy and revered in the censure of all around me, because she made me so.

If we read, or if we spoke together of the creations of genius, as they are to be found in its richest treasuries, if we summoned one

another's attention to its most tender or spirit-stirring effusions, the specimens that occurred gained I know not what of life and beauty by our thus enjoying them together. Each passage, each image, each burst and pouring out of the soul in our authors, was ever after valued by either of us, from the recollection that it was first recommended to observation by the other. In the female bosom in particular, there is a quickness, a truth, an intuition of feeling and taste, by which I was specially the gainer, and with which no individual of the sterner sex may ever hope to compete.

Our communications were characterised by the most perfect unreserve. Of consequence we had an advantage in studying the inmost recesses of human character, which perhaps no other human creatures ever possessed in an equal degree. "The eye sees not itself, but by reflection from some other thing." The study of the heart of man is only perfected by our

looking into ourselves. But this insight is of a precarious nature. A man "beholds his natural face in a glass, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he is." We cannot hold the glass steady for our own inspection. When we are conscious that we are aiming at that subtlest of all exercises, the knowledge of ourselves, the very consciousness new-models every feature, and we never see ourselves as we should appear to the eye of the impartial spectator. The recollection that we are engaged in the act of introspection cramps our muscles and our limbs, gives a new pulsation to the heart, and annihilates that free play of every articulation, which is necessary to our arriving at a genuine verdict. But no human creature is so deeply sensitive to the inspection of another, as to his own. We can on such an occasion the more easily steady our joints, and preserve ourselves on our centre. To this we may add, that the

examined may not be at all times sensible to the process that is going on. He may be subjected to the process of the analyser, when he is himself least aware of it.—Thus we became in a singular degree adepts in the science of the human heart; and I can answer for at least myself in this investigation, that the more I knew the chosen partner of my life, the more I found to commend. We had no reserve with each other, for we had nothing which either our inclinations or our interests prompted us to conceal.

A prominent characteristic of our intercourse was, that it was never my practice, as is elsewhere almost universally the mode in human society, to examine my thoughts in silence, and recite inwardly what I was going to say, for the purpose of discovering what there might be in it, that would produce upon my hearer a different effect from that which I had in contemplation. Every thing was lis-

tened to by us on either side in a spirit of mutual deference. In ordinary society even the most intimate, there is apt to be a sort of concealed warfare going on, that prompts either party to receive with jealousy the suggestions of the other. The husband or the wife says tacitly, "I have known your judgment to be so often at fault; you are so hasty, or so much under the control of a superfluous caution, so easily duped, or so unreasonably sceptical, so much guided by your general associates, or so wedded to the doctrines of a sect to which you adhere, or of particular authors whose works you are accustomed to admire, your views of morals, of religion, of the exceeding importance, or the comparative valuelessness, of affairs that are going on upon the stage of nations, are so different from mine, that your espousing and advocating a certain sentiment is itself a reason why I should look upon it with suspicion." The husband or the

wife therefore speaks mistrustfully, anticipates objection and hostility, and preserves unsaid many things that are in themselves as it were part and parcel of his inmost soul.

But between Emilia and myself there were no reserves; as there was no fear of misconstruction. We talked to each other even as a man talks to his own heart. There was no prejudice that lurked in the hearer, no alienation: on the contrary every thing that was suggested, was listened to with a disposition to be convinced, and to adopt what was offered. Our creeds were the same, and our tastes; we were predisposed to the same occupations and the same preferences. Our pulses beat responsively to each other. The excursion and the amusement that one liked, was an object of choice to the other. It was as if one soul ruled in two bodies; that, "each heart being set" upon the same generous purpose, the same common result, our intercourse could

in no wise be made "a stage to feed contention," but was a cooperation of two equal and consenting powers to produce one effect.

Between two persons intimately connected with each other, and who are continually in each other's society, intervals of silence will frequently occur. This may happen when all their modes of thinking and feeling are already known to each other, and their topics are exhausted. But it will oftenest happen between persons of opposite sexes, whom the Power that made us has cast in so dissimilar moulds, and whose ways of arriving at their conclusions, and shaping their sentiments, are so unlike,—it will happen, I say, because a thousand topics, a thousand deeply cherished feelings, and most valued trains of thinking are shut out of the pale of disquisition, as being points in which the parties are already aware they shall not coincide, and by starting which they will only produce the effect of stirring up

unfriendly feelings, and discord, either latent or avowed. It is surprising how numerous, when once the list has been begun to be formed, these topics will become. The very circumstance, that we refrain from giving them utterance, makes them occur more frequently to our silent reflections. We would give the world that the partner of our days and our board agreed with us in these things; but we believe that the attempt to bring about this agreement would have no other result than to set us further asunder.

It is thus that private comes to resemble general society. In general society there are a multitude of topics upon which I am not tempted to open my mouth. I anticipate, that what I should feel prompted to say, would not be received in the same spirit in which it would be delivered. It would rouse a whole host of prejudices against it. Each of the hearers would abound in his own sense, and would be little

disposed to weigh, or, in any just interpretation of the term, even to hear, what was alleged in behalf of a different doctrine. Why should I give myself the trouble to utter what will not be listened to, or to support a proposition by arguments when I know it will make no converts? The cause of truth will not be benefited; and I shall myself gain no credit, either for the singleness of my intentions, or the ingenuity of my reasonings.—In reality indeed it is not so: seed sown in stony ground will not be totally without a crop; an argument that meets with nothing but apparent discouragement at first, may not be wholly lost; and the good that we have attempted to do, will sometimes return to us, and shew the solidity and depth of its effects, at a time when we were most inclined to despair. But the impatience of the human mind urges us to desist; and, if we do not effect every thing in its most conspicuous form, and in the shortest

imaginable period, we persuade ourselves that we do nothing.

Between Emilia and me the case was altogether different. We were in no instance parties working in opposite directions, and who, the more active they are, the more they impede each other's progress, but were like labourers, both employed in breaking up the soil of one field, or enlarging and levelling the same road. Our united force was directed to one object; and, as if we had been the component parts of one mighty machine, we removed mountains, and conquered obstacles, which seemed to bid defiance to human power. The variety of our faculties insured but the more success to our efforts; and the masculine firmness of the one, and the feminine delicacy of the other, enabled us but the more securely to lay open the inmost recesses of truth, and disclose her mysteries, yielding as she did to the joint energies of both.

If at any time we differed in judgment, we searched with sincerity into the cause of our difference, and endeavoured to find out on which side the truth really lay. A sentiment delivered by either, that might at first sight appear to the other startling and strange, was saluted with a love, and welcomed with an encouraging smile, which shewed the hearer to be more than half converted already, by his confidence in and deference for the speaker.

This was checked however on the other side with an honest caution, that seemed to say, "Come now, no treachery; you must be a friend, and not a flatterer; if you do not weigh my suggestion with soberness and impartiality, you will too surely mislead me, and, when I relied on you for sound direction, will unwarily urge me forward in a path which leads to delusion and folly."

The frankness we exercised was perfect. We talked to each other, as a man talks to his own

soul. We did not utter all our thoughts: for thought is endless; its process is such as no words can follow; but we uttered every thing worthy to be recited, and to which a precise or intelligible form could be given. The sound of our own voices encouraged us; our mutual answers, replies and rejoinders gave an indescribable animation to our dialogue. We led each other on; we gave breath to each unfinished conception. There was no fear on either side that an uncandid advantage would be taken of trips and mistakes that might be incurred. We rather resembled what has been affirmed of certain animals, who are said by their parental assiduity and care to complete the conformation of their half-unfinished progeny. Our policy was like that of Jupiter, who, when the mother of Bacchus perished untimely before the birth of her offspring, by a miracle supplied the place of the dam; or, as in the case of Triptolemus, whom Ceres covered with

glowing embers, till his energies expanded, and his limbs became endued with a suitable firmness.

The habit of entire and unhesitating explicitness which we cultivated towards each other, removed us as it were into another class of beings from the human creatures with which we were surrounded. We had no distrust. Our hearts were ever on our lips. We considered the faculty of speech as given us to express our thoughts. We had no idea of those ambages and prevarications by which the majority of our species are ever seeking to defeat the curiosity, the one of the other, by which they are taught continually to look at their phrases before they are uttered, lest by any accident they might tell that which it was intended should remain unknown. The difference was this: social man is essentially a coward; we were fearless. Social man regards all those by whom he is surrounded as enemies,

or beings who may become such. He is ever on his guard, lest his plain speaking should be wilfully perverted, or should assume a meaning he never thought of, through the animosity or prejudice of the individual that hears him. The duration of the married state of Emilia and myself was brief: but, as long as it lasted, the whole world wore a different hue to me, from that which it has exhibited since her decease. Then I had the sunshine of the soul; and the light I carried within, came back to me by reflection from every thing I saw. The whole world was beautiful; and all that dwelt upon its surface were friendly. Love was uppermost in my bosom; and the love that I bore to Emilia was in some degree shared among every thing that lived. My forehead was without wrinkles; my eye was steady and serene; my lips were curved with the curve of philanthropy; the purple light of complacence for ever showed itself on my cheeks. I spoke

to every one with confidence; for I was a stranger to fear. And, as my heart beat with kindliness to all, so I believed every one felt a responsive kindliness for me.

It is not my purpose to relate the events of my married life: otherwise I could write volumes on this single theme. I could rehearse whole conversations, some of which were all mind, others all soul. I could describe tones that thrilled my soul. When I call them to mind, they come to me sometimes with such vivid emotion, that I no longer appear to recollect them, but actually to hear them. I turn round, and expect to see Emilia, present to the sense of sight, as well as of hearing. It is not in words to express what my disappointment then makes me feel. I worked myself up to such a pitch, that obstacles were no longer remembered. Seas and mountains were removed. Time, that creature of the imagination, which is, and is not, no longer

interposed between me and the consummation of my longings. The grave gave up its dead. But why do I say that? There was no grave. The body no longer mouldered in the tomb. It was as we read in the Evangelist, when "the bodies of saints which slept, came out of their sepulchres, and went into the holy city, and were seen of many." My state had been that of a trance; and, when I awoke, words cannot speak my anguish and my agony.

The attitudes of Emilia are not less present to me. Her walk was not like that of any other human being: it had such dignity and ease: it ravished the soul, at the same time that it had no design or consciousness. I remember that quick motion of her hand, which expressed a sweet, an affectionate, yet somewhat impatient rejection of an idea that was named. I remember her smile of scorn, her disdain, so noble, yet so truly feminine. I remember her smile of tenderness, in which,

while a sudden flush mantled in the cheek, and the eyes seemed to emit sparks of fire, the heart melted, and the whole soul dissolved in affection.

She was without a fault: at least I can remember none. Her emotions were sudden; and sometimes before I was aware of it, I looked up, and saw a cloud gathering on her brow. Then she would for a moment be silent, and proudly shut up within her a discontent that would not stoop to complain. But ten words of ingenuous expostulation on my part would disarm her anger, and remove the preparations of hostility that seemed collected to defend the fortress of her independence. An angelic smile would follow; so that the wrath (if such it may be termed) was like a thin curtain or cloud, that temporarily obscured the refulgence of her goodness, which removed, the luminary would shine forth more brightly than ever. And the inexpressible grace with

which she would confess her error the instant she was aware of it, imparted a delight such as the world can never know; and in transport I would swear that sinless perfection was inconceivable folly; while thus to err, and thus to avow it, was a triumph unapproachable by the condition of angelic natures.

CHAPTER III.

THE first fruit of our union was a daughter, that individual whom I have named in the outset of my narrative, as being, when guilt with all its terrors at length overtook me, my only friend, "a friend, whom the ties of nature and her own excellent dispositions have rendered mine by bonds never to be dissolved."

When our child was about a year old, a vehement desire seized me to visit the continent. I felt as if my present period of life was peculiarly adapted to sustain change of place, moderate fatigue, the climbing of mountains, the descending into the depths of the earth, and all those exertions which an in-

quisitive spirit suggests, and those difficulties which the grand and magnificent style of natural objects presents to the traveller. I became desirous to see pictures, and survey buildings, to contemplate art in the climates where she had especially flourished, to hear the languages and accents of many-visaged man, to remark his habits, his disposition, and his aims, as they are variously modified by the temperature of the elements, and the forms of government under which he subsists; in a word, like Ulysses, to understand the minds of my species, and see the clusters of their habitations.

All this was not to be accomplished but in a leisurely progress. And I could not endure the idea of being so long separated from the light of my life, the presence of that creature who seemed to me to be as much required, as corporeal nourishment, for the recreation of my mortal powers, the incomparable Emilia. She consented to be my companion. My choice

became her choice. The object that attracted me, appeared to have peculiar charms for her.

But what was to become of her child, the being she seemed to love scarcely less than her husband? She had never yet endured an absence from it that exceeded the period of a few hours. Was it possible that she should suffer herself to be deprived of the sight of this creature, so fascinating in her eyes, for the entire period of twelve months, to which length of time it was not improbable our travels might be drawn out? Who would take such charge of it as the anxieties of a mother demanded, would supply its wants and anticipate its wishes, defend it from all accidents and evil, watch its early indications of temper and understanding, mould the one and direct the other, and forward, with incessant but wholesome progress, the improvement that was required for so precious a treasure?

We had a remedy for all this. Emilia had

a friend, Catherine Fanshaw. They had been bred together from their earliest fancy. They, like

> two artificial gods,
> Had with their needles shaped a single flower,
> Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
> Both warbling of one song,—
> As if their hands and sides, voices and minds,
> Had been incorporate.

Emilia and Catherine had been married in one day—first made distinct in this, that Catherine had no child. Their affection for each other was unparalleled; never did sisters, twin-sisters, entertain such mutual love as they did. My daughter was named Catherine in memorial of this friendship.

When we left England for the continent, Mrs. Fanshaw had been two years a wife; but she was neither a mother, nor appeared to be in the way to become so. This circumstance seemed to render the temporary adoption which Emilia's friend proposed to my wife, particularly suitable.

Never was attention so exemplary as this friend paid to her little namesake. She felt perhaps more than she would have done, if the child had been her own. She loved her not less than her own flesh and blood: and in addition to this, she regarded her as the representative and pledge of her absent sister. She never spoke to the child, but she thought of the mother. She lavished on it a thousand caresses, the manifestations of her long-fixed attachment. She exerted herself to trace in its expanding limbs and unfolding features every thing that might bring before her the playmate and companion of her youth. And, in every thing she did for the child, she not only obeyed the impulses of her generous spirit, and aimed at the approbation of her own judgment; she also remembered for ever that she had another umpire, that must be satisfied, and that would come at no distant time to examine her performance, and see how she had employed her

talent; an umpire of the clearest discernment, the soundest understanding, and the acutest feelings, who would detect any mistake, if even a rose-leaf almost had lost its smoothness and become wrinkled.

Mrs. Fanshaw particularly applied to the contriving expedients, by means of which the absence of the mother might least affect the child, and least produce the results of estrangement. Among others she bethought herself of this. She had a portrait of Emilia, painted by an incomparable artist, and which had all the vivid colours of life. The painter had seized one of the happiest expressions of the exile, an expression which bespoke condescension and tenderness, and seemed to have the power of exciting correspondent tenderness in the beholder. This portrait she regarded as capable of being made the instrument to produce in the child the sentiments she desired.

She did not suffer the picture to be always

in the presence of the little Catherine. It was placed in a select and retired apartment, to which the child was only led, for the most part once a day, at well chosen periods. These periods were such at which the child was in the best frame of mind to receive impressions of complacency, and at which her preceptress (if such a term may be admitted in speaking of a pupil at so immature an age) was most delighted and in good humour with her. To see the picture was treated as a regale and a reward. Further than this, the picture was so placed that it could not be viewed but at a certain distance. Emilia's friend told the child that that was its mother; and, when the child was able to speak, the first articulate sound she uttered, as she saw the picture, or thought of the picture, was, Mamma! Her guardian knew that that which is immoveably in one position a child soon learns to separate from the idea of life, and passes by with careless-

ness and indifference. Mrs. Fanshaw devised a remedy for this. A curtain was spread before the recess in which the portrait was placed; and this curtain was drawn back with a certain degree of ceremony. Means were contrived that the portrait should be viewed through an optical delusion, sometimes through a magnifying medium, and sometimes looking as if it were a miniature. The picture grew into a sort of amusement; and the child and her protector went to play at mamma. But each exhibition concluded with a kind of epilogue, judiciously adapted to the capacity of the spectator, of which Love and a sort of worship formed, if I may so express myself, the concluding notes. In quitting the scene, the child was taught to kneel, and join its little hands as in the attitude of supplication. The curtain that had been drawn back, was then spread again, and the child resorted to her ordinary scenes and amusements, but with a kind of chastised and

gratified feeling, as if she had been engaged in a ceremonial of a religious sort. Mrs. Fanshaw told her pupil, that her real mother, of whom this was the representation, was far, far away, travelling in a coach and in a ship, but that in time she would come back, and, if her daughter conducted herself rightly, and Mrs. Fanshaw felt authorised to make a good report of her, would stay with her, and remove no more.

All this made a deep impression upon the little Catherine. She was ever eager at the appointed time to visit the dear mother, that smiled upon her so kindly, though she could not speak.

One day, by some accident, the door of this apartment was left not quite closed; and the child had found means unobserved to steal into the sanctuary. The curtain was half drawn back. The picture, as I have mentioned, was placed in a recess, so that it could

be viewed at a distance, but not touched, or approached. The child had been taught to kneel; she kneeled now unbid. She stretched out her little hands, and said in a soft voice, as if persuading, Come, mamma, come; I want you! Mrs. Fanshaw appeared at this moment, caught her in her arms, motioned her with a wave of her hand to take leave of the object before her, drew the curtain, and overwhelmed the child with a thousand kisses and embraces. This happened when the infant was nearly two years old.

What I have related may seem too precocious, and improbable. But every thing, in an effect to be produced on the human mind, depends upon the manner in which a thing is done. That which, repeated by an unskilful imitator, would awaken no single emotion, and even scarcely have the power to arrest the infant thoughts in their wanderings, may yet, if done in another manner, be found to still the

soul, to stop the youthful blood as it courses "up and down the veins," to suspend even the breath, and make the child lift up its eyes in innocent wonder, expecting, yet eager to know, what will come next. All depends on the clearness of feeling, the singleness of heart, and precision of spirit brought into action by the instructor; and these endowments were possessed by Mrs. Fanshaw in the most extraordinary degree.

We returned from our excursion to the continent in about twelve months from the time that we left England; and the reunion of Emilia and her friend, and of Emilia and her child, were fruitful of no common delight. The little Catherine was puzzled at first between the mamma of the recess, whom she had been accustomed to visit every day, but who, however intreated, never moved or spoke, and the living mamma, who now held her in

her embraces, addressed to her words of love, and sung to her with her soft voice,

Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,

that would now soothe her into "a sacred and home-felt delight," and now cause a tear, unconscious and unbidden, to stray down her cheek. The child insisted upon leading the truant and new-come mamma to the mamma that was always to be found, whenever sought, would compare the two with intent and interchanging gazing, and conclude with burying her face in her mother's bosom.

CHAPTER IV.

We parted no more, till that blow came, which parted us for ever, and extinguished the only perfect happiness of which I could form even the idea. Short indeed was the period in which such enviable society was continued to me. We had been home only about a year, and the little Catherine was but three years old, when we took an excursion upon a lake, which was but at a small distance from my habitation. The day was specially serene, without being oppressively hot; a pleasant western breeze played upon our cheeks, and refreshed our spirits. It occasioned however only a quiet and lazy ripple of the surface, and no wise inter-

fered with the plan of our course. Never had I experienced a more complete felicity. We began to lay the plans of future years. Sportively it occurred to us to anticipate that decline of life, which, if the thread of our existence is not suddenly cut off, must to all mortals arrive at last. We both of us agreed that that would occasion no diminution to our content, that even wrinkles would turn into motives of endearment, and that the longer we were accustomed to each other's society, the more impossible we should each of us feel it was to live without it. The rash impulses of headstrong youth would be gone; we should have tried the scenes of many-coloured life, without arriving at the repining and unsatisfied inferences of the wise man, should talk over old times, and read together once again the favourite authors of our youth. We should smile at the different aspects with which things would appear to us with a few decads of years

between, the same, yet not the same, with such variation as the objects of nature display in the ascending and the setting sun. In books, in tales, in characters, the thing we looked at would be unaltered; but it would have a frequent novelty of appearance, that arose not from itself, but from the change which had insensibly taken place in the mind of the observer.

From one species of idleness and luxury we proceeded to another. Our little girl had fallen asleep in my arms. We spread some clothes that we had with us, in the middle of the boat, and drew a slight covering over her, that she might remain undisturbed. As I laid her upon this species of couch, I bestowed on her a gentle kiss, taking care not to rouse her. She is a sweet child, said I: what can we wish her to be, that we do not find in her?—But you know the burthen of my song, Emilia: I desire a son.

Man is the substantive thing in the terrestrial creation: woman is but the adjective, that cannot stand by itself. A sweet thing she is; I grant it: no one has a greater right to say this than I have. But she is a frail flower; she wants a shelter, a protector, a pioneer. She is all that omniscience, that principle of divine meditation (so far as we can understand it), could produce, for the best consolation, the entire repose and good of the stronger sex; and, in forming his happiness, she forms her own. She has beauty of form and exterior, and gentleness of soul. She has understanding, so as to form the suitable helpmate of her husband, the partner of his counsels, the controler of his excesses, the mitigator of his stoutness, the inspirer of all true gentleness and refinement, and of the tenderest and most extatic effusions of the soul. She has understanding such as he may not despise; she has the good and desirable qualities which he has

not, or has not in an equal degree. Sometimes she is in intellect the rival of her father, her husband, or her brother; sometimes, but rarely, she outstrips him—to remind us, if I may so express it, what the Creator could have done, if that had been reconcileable to the great plan of the whole.

I have always thought that one of the most beautiful pictures of the angelic control that woman may exercise over the sternness of man, is that which is given by Froissard in his account of the surrender of Calais. Edward the Third had besieged the town nearly twelve months; and it was now reduced to the extremity of famine, and was left without hope of relief. In this condition the citizens offered to surrender on terms. But Edward determined that they had held out longer than the rules of war authorised them to do; had they submitted earlier, it would have been different; but they had subjected him and the besieging

army to much hardship and calamity, and arrested the career of his victories from sheer obstinacy, when there was no longer any hope of a favourable result; and he was resolved to inflict a severe retaliation. It would have an ill effect upon the inhabitants of other places similarly circumstanced, if he did not shew inflexibly in this instance, that the time of the invader was not to be trifled with, through hopeless stubbornness and contumacy. At length he relaxed from his severity, and said that, if six of the most considerable citizens attended him, barefooted and bareheaded, with ropes about their necks, bearing the keys of the city, and to be disposed of as he thought proper, he would spare the lives of the rest.

This stern decree was heard by the besieged with consternation; and they saw no means to comply with the demand of the conqueror. At length six citizens were found who voluntarily came forward, and offered themselves as an

expiation for the rest. They entered the camp of the English monarch in the costume of malefactors, and were ordered for execution. Such was the decision of a barbarous age: so broad was the line of distinction that was then drawn between gentlemen, men of generous strain and descent, and ignoble citizens!

It happened that Philippa, consort to Edward the Third, had just arrived in the camp, having fought a decisive battle against David, king of Scots, who at the instigation of the French had entered Northumberland with fifty thousand men, and carried his ravages to the gates of Durham. Philippa with a very inferior force defeated the enemy, and made their king her prisoner. Crowned with this success, she crossed the sea, and presented herself to her husband in the midst of his triumph. She witnessed the demeanour of the heroic burgesses, and, struck to the very soul with the order she heard awarded against

them, threw herself on her knees, and with resistless tears and intreaties prevailed that their generous self-sacrifice should not be thus recompensed, but that they should be dismissed with the commendation and honour due to their virtue. Here was the characteristic exhibition of female prowess, interposing with grace, with beauty, and all the melting softness of the sex, powerful, nay irresistible, in its weakness. [I did not tell this story in detail in our conversation; the whole was familiar to Emilia; it was enough that I alluded to it.]

I was well disposed to do the amplest justice to the perfections of a sex, the consummate exemplar of which was the life of my life: but —I wished for a son. "All ages and nations have recognised the practical inferiority of the female sex. They are not admitted among our legislators: in representative governments they have not even a direct voice in the choice of

our representatives. Every path of society is open to the male; an infinite majority is shut upon the female. We know for her scarcely any independent choice of life; her proper station is the condition of marriage. Of an equal prospect in the ample plain of existence she is deprived; the single woman feels her disadvantages and her weakness, and she is exposed to temptations and dangers which, once yielded to, render her the outcast of the earth. Of this condition of the frailer sex we must make the best that we can, and exert ourselves that it may have a prosperous issue in the case of our child. I am contented to have a daughter; but I desire to have a son."

So luxuriant and unconfined was our talk; happy, beyond the powers of words to declare, almost of thought to conceive. When suddenly the face of the heavens above us began to alter: the sky was no longer in every part unobscured; a cloud appeared to gather in the

horizon. It became larger and blacker; the wind whistled with a wintery cold. The air, which had hitherto been balmy and cherishing, opening all the pores of the body, and giving exaltation to the spirits, suddenly turned chilly and somewhat piercing. Unprepared as we were for the change, it produced an uncomfortable sensation, a shiver. Presently the whole hemisphere darkened above us; and first rain, and then hail, and then rain again, beat upon us with impetuosity. The thunder rolled; and the lightning flashed. Emilia endeavoured to smile, for she knew there was no danger. She pulled her cloak close about her, and nestled her little girl in her bosom.

We had been for more than two hours exposed to all the inclemency of the weather, before we reached the shelter of our own roof. I insisted on it that Emilia should immediately retire to bed: she appeared to me seriously indisposed. She was in a state of pregnancy,

perhaps in progress to give birth to the son, upon the thought of which my mind so inordinately doted. But, alas, no such blessing was in store for me. Of mother, and of all hope of future progeny by her, I was at once bereft. The accident seemed a slight one: but, as the poet testifies,

> We dally idly with the darts of Death:
> Wet, dry, cold, hot, at the appointed hour,
> All act subservient to the tyrant's power;
> And, when obedient Nature knows his will,
> A fly, a grapestone, or a hair can kill.

Emilia retired to bed seriously indisposed. In the morning she had all the symptoms of a violent fever. The period was critical. She was attacked with repeated shivering fits. She became delirious. On the evening of this day she had a miscarriage. On the third day, in defiance of all the aids of medicine, she died. She had brief intervals in which she appeared somewhat collected and composed; and in these she earnestly recommended to me the care of her child.

CHAPTER V.

It is impossible to represent in words the total revolution this event made in my existence. It was as if in a single moment "sun and moon were in the flat sea sunk." Nature that had been so beautiful, so resplendent, so fascinating, lost at once the soul to which it was indebted for all its charms. The rainbow tints of the globe in which I dwelt, the soft and tender hues, the delicate blendings, the undulating lights, varying for ever, and chasing one another beneath the cope of heaven, were gone; and, in place of them, every thing was stained with one melancholy colour, one deadly and unwholesome brown.

The air appeared to me murky and thick, an atmosphere that bore pestilence on its wings. I looked around me; the outline of things, though obscure and dim, was the same: but where was now the grace that so lately animated them, the ornament that had tingled in all my veins, and shot through my soul?

The whole world comprised to me but two species of things; the things that were associated with the recollections of Emilia, and the things that were not so related. Upon the former of these I dwelt endlessly. The sensations I drew from them were bitter and sweet. They told me, Emilia was no more! Watch for her as earnestly as you please; you shall never see her, never hear her. Watch the opening of her chamber-door; it shall never open; or, if it does, it shall be opened by another, never by her upon whom your heart and all your thoughts are fixed. At one time

and another I heard footsteps; my thought was of Emilia; but, ah, how different! Never that step so light, so airy, that even talked to me as it approached, that was full of promise, that was all health, and spirit, and love. Her chair was vacant; her place at the table unsupplied; and at times, when accidentally I turned my eye to the spot in which I had been accustomed to find her, it almost threw me into convulsions; it made every fibre of my frame tremble again.

This indeed was bitter. But in the midst of bitterness, I found something fascinating, that said to me, Go on; steep your soul to the very lips in these melancholy recollections. I never willingly shut the book of grief, never sought to withdraw my thoughts from what saddened me. Grief was all my joy. All other things were disgusting, shrivelled and withered up my heart: this opened the sluices of my

affections; and I experienced a nameless satisfaction, when I felt that it was exhausting and destroying in me the principle of life.

The things that had no connection with Emilia, that did not talk to me of her who was the object of all my preferences, were insupportable. They occupied my time, but excited in me no interest. They called upon me for attention, which, when given, ran counter to every thing that I desired, and, when withheld, left me in deadly vacancy, disturbing the Lethe of my spirit with its nothings, and importuning me with a consciousness of that existence which I would have given worlds to forget.

I busied myself among all those things, which told me that Emilia once had lived, and once had been mine. I turned over a thousand times the articles of her attire, and what had been the ornaments of her person. I doted on the desk at which she had been accustomed

to write, and the inkstand which had afforded her a medium for recording her thoughts. Her miniature, set round with brilliants, and the back of which was ornamented with a lock of her beautiful hair, was a companion of which I never tired. Her handwriting to my eyes was the masterpiece of the creation. The lines which her pen had traced were of unrivalled elegance and grace; and the words, which imaged on paper her sentiments and thoughts, were inimitable. Her style was the style in which angels would have desired to talk. I kept all the letters I had received from her in a casket; they were often on subjects that fastidious men would have sneered at, of the lightest and most evanescent nature, the pen dipped in the tints of the rainbow; but they were all precious to me; they contained some fragment of the soul of this "divine perfection of a woman." I numbered them; I read them a thousand times;

and the last time they appeared to me as fresh as the first.

The late incomparable companion of my days had a truly original mind. She was naturally learned; she studied not the world through "the spectacles of books," or the teachings of her instructors; there was to her no medium, no "seeing as through a glass darkly;" she communicated immediately with external nature, or with the living habits and tempers of her fellow-creatures. She was in this respect as if there had been no such thing as literature; by an intuitive discernment she read the book of nature, and all her conclusions were her own.

This circumstance had at all times given a peculiar charm to her talk. It was not a lesson, "learned and conned by rote; set in a note-book." You were sure to hear from her something new; new in the substance of what she reported, or new in the manner in

which she saw the things she described. She viewed every thing in a way characteristic of herself; the temper, the wholesome frame of her mind, was as an aerial perspective, giving a fresh and enchanting hue of its own to every thing she observed. You gained an insight not only of the object itself; you received in addition that frame of an angelic spirit, which made her see the world in a manner in which perhaps no other person saw it, more harmonised, the colours blended, every part belonging to and altogether constituting a whole.

There was no preparation in any thing she delivered, no tint of affectation, no wrinkle produced by any retrospect to herself, her own glory, and the expectation to be admired for what she said, or what she did. When I sat, or when I walked with her, I saw the thoughts of her mind exactly as they rose. It was all simple, and at the same time all wise. Every thing was sound, every thing fresh and

sensible; and, if it had been written in a book, it would have shewn itself with the liveliness of Montaigne, and the depth of thought we are accustomed to ascribe to Zoroaster. It was prompt eloquence, a rapid and unimpeded stream, "more tuneable than needed lute or harp to add more sweetness." It was a stream that enlivened its banks, while "with fresh flowerets field and valley smiled," and the heart of the hearer leaped with delight, and all his circulations became cheerful and gay. It was wisdom in its newest gloss, unblown upon, unfaded. She was indeed and in truth, "fancy's child," while to your astonished sense she "warbled her native woodnotes wild."

When I lost her, I at first loathed my existence. Wearisome nights were appointed to me. "When I laid down, I said, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? I was full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day." The light was importunate; food

was distasteful. The visits of my friends were past endurance; and solitude was intolerable. I longed to close my eyes, and shut out day-light for ever, to be gathered to my fathers, and be at rest.

There is something in man however, that will not let him be long at quiet. The first thing is the cravings of nature. The constitution of our existence is truly pourtrayed in the well-known story of the Ephesian matron. However she gave herself up at first to the excess of her grief for her husband's death, and resolved to be shut up with him in his tomb, not many days had passed, before she felt the empire of human infirmity, and was glad of any thing that would deliver her from the monotony of her own meditations, and the eternal wearisomeness of days, "that cream and mantle like a standing pool."

There is an indescribable something that ties us to life. For this purpose it is not necessary

that we should be happy. Though our life be almost without enjoyment, we do not consent to part with it. Without going to the extreme of Mæcenas, who said, "Though my hand, my foot, my hip should refuse their functions, though I should have a mountain on my back, and my teeth be loosened in their sockets, nay, nail me, if you will, upon a cross, still I desire to live:" without this, there is nevertheless a sentiment that stirs within us, that produces an undefinable aversion to the thought of ceasing to be, to "lie in cold oblivion and to rot."

It was this that inspired Robinson Crusoe, or whoever was his actual prototype, and has inspired every shipwrecked mariner, when he has found himself thrown upon a coast without human inhabitants. It is a dreary thing to be cut off from the society of our fellows and the accommodations of civilised life. We should almost expect an individual so circumstanced,

as soon as he had had time to survey his forlorn situation, to climb a neighbouring promontory, and cast himself back into the element from which he had been rescued. But it is not so. He looks round, and begins to collect the fragments and broken planks of the vessel in which he had been embarked. He is like the wretch who watches a dying flame. He gathers together every combustible material that offers itself to his view, that he may detain the celestial visitor. He casts about and considers how he may supply himself with nourishment and shelter. He meditates perseveringly, and counts up all his resources. He shrinks from no labour. He is appalled by no privations. Life, life, is the inexplicable thing we cling to; and, however we may pretend to hold it cheap and to brave death when at a distance, we all of us, with very few exceptions, and those arising from a preternatural

tension, verify the apophthegm of the scripture, "Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath, will he give for his life."

The mind of man bends itself after a short struggle to the yoke of necessity. "Things without all remedy," are found to be "without regard." We shut ourselves up within the compass of possibilities, and become reconciled to what cannot be avoided. There are indulgencies without which a man thinks he cannot live; there are benefits that seem to constitute the core and soul of our existence; but, when these can no longer be had, we make the best of what is still within our reach.

I considered, that I was young, that I had but recently come into the possession of all my faculties of body and mind. According to what is called the course of nature, I might live many years. Should I, out of the consideration of what I had lost, throw away what was left? Or, should I still, notwithstanding

the fearful wreck I had experienced, draw in my expectations and my desires, clip the wings of my aspirations, and suit my mind to the narrowness of my possessions? I was an exile, driven out for ever from the pleasant land where I had been so much delighted to dwell. I was condemned to abide under inclement skies, with dreary and unvarying prospects, and on a barren soil. Yet surely it was more worthy of the inherent energies of man, of the powers with which God had endowed me, to make the best even of this. I could exercise my mind in reading and contemplation. I possessed the property which had descended to me from my ancestors. With this, dispensed with judgment and a beneficent spirit, I could do much good: and he that does good to others, will infallibly catch the advantage on the rebound to himself. The world, in its revolutions and changes, is for ever new: I could observe this, and gather, unless by my own

fault, much instruction and excitement from what I saw.

I remembered the last injunctions of the adored partner of my life. She had adjured me to watch anxiously for the welfare of our only child. She had said to me, "Now that our Catherine is about to be deprived of her mother, it is your office to take care that you discharge to her the duties of both, and be to her a father and a mother." Now that I could no longer see my Emilia, no longer contribute to her pleasure, and be rewarded by her smiles, it was by so much the more incumbent upon me to build up a monument to her memory, and to regard her last suggestions as inviolable. Starting from this thought, I gradually came to regard her child as her living representative. I desired to heap all sorts of benefits on its head. I sought its society, not always, but often, and at stated returns. I found a thousand things in the child that reminded me

of Emilia, certain tones of her voice, certain movements of her limbs, now serious, and now playful. When these things occurred, they would sometimes shoot through me with the force of electricity, and at others all at once fill my eyes with an unexpected gush of tears. By degrees they grew less agonising, and changed into sources of melancholy pleasure.

Before I had been thus unhappily installed the sole guardian of my child, she had already attained in a certain measure the faculty of articulate speech, and by the condescension and judicious care of her mother had come to exercise it in a sounder style and with more reflection, than is usual in so early a period of life. But the constancy with which the child exercised the talent of reflection, and appeared to unrol and consult the volume of her thoughts, had by no means the effect to render her phlegmatic and slow. The consultation had the air of being instantaneous; the light

from heaven, so to express myself, that attended her, seemed mechanically to fall on the right passage, the very canon that was wanted. It was like the difference I have seen in boys at school: while one boy of duller intellect pores down the page of his dictionary, and by dint of mere industry comes at last to the word and explanation required, another catches it in a moment; the rest of the page is as it were annihilated, and the thing that was sought presents itself alone to him. This felicity in my little Catherine converted what might have been meditation into inspiration, and gave to her otherwise original vein of thinking, the air of a spontaneous production.—The description I have here given may seem to be incompatible with the fewness of her years. But let it be considered that I studied her, made her a theme for my reflections, and marked the present state of her faculties with something of the same diligence, that an anatomist takes up

his dissecting knife, or a chemist resolves a complex substance into its simple elements. I frolicked with her; I asked her questions, in a manner the furthest in the world from suggesting the gravity of my purpose. I appeared to be playing the fool with her the most egregiously, when I was most perseveringly engaged in experiments of the highest philosophy.

When I concentred my attention the most deeply in reading or writing, when I folded my arms, and sought to develop in my own mind the perplexed mazes of thinking, when I shut my eyes, and conjured up the image of Emilia, held conversations with the dear departed, and lived over the scenes of our recent intercourse as if they had been present, the little Catherine would often be seated in one corner of the apartment, and would sometimes race from end to end with her lapdog, uttering shouts of laughter, and making noises that might almost have awaked the dead. I was not interrupted;

I did not hear it. My mind was abstracted; my attention held on its course: such is the power of habit.

I would then suddenly thrust my table on one side, and say, Come, Kate, now play with me. Or she would occasionally insist on a similar pliancy on my part. At one time and another perhaps I did not attend to her infant importunities. In that case she would pluck my sleeve, or embrace my knee. This was always effectual. I instantly descended from my altitudes. Plato and Euclid were put to rout in a moment. The only instances in which she failed, were when I was engaged in devotional intercourse with the fancied image or the intellectual representation of her mother. I would sometimes in that case snatch up my hat, and withdraw into the gloomiest recesses of my garden, while the child, impressed with awe, would follow me with its eye, and wonder what could be the matter with papa.

Mrs. Fanshaw would often desire that the child might be left for a while under her care; and Catherine spent almost as much of her time with this maternal friend, as at her own home. Mrs. Fanshaw lived only twelve miles from my residence, and had no child of her own. She loved the little Catherine, I had almost said with more than a mother's affection. Between mother and child there is often no third party; and the elder of the two is, as we say, accountable only to God and her conscience. But Mrs. Fanshaw was but the deputy of the real mother of my Catherine. She had a report to give in, and no principal to receive it. When an officer of state and his auditor pass their accounts together, the auditor writes his name at the bottom of the page, and this operates as a quietus. The officer is encouraged; the sanction of approbation is visible; and the officer proceeds with new courage to discharge the duties of the following quarter. But Mrs. Fan-

shaw could receive no such sanction: the image of Emilia was for ever before the eyes of her mind; but the divinity to whose approbation she aspired, preserved for ever the same passionless placidity of features, and did not so much as once nod the head in token of honourable acquittal. This mute intercourse that subsisted between the living and the dead, gave to the former by so much the more tenderness and delicacy of conscience. For want of the final and solemn adjudication she would have sought, the surviving friend was compelled to be the auditor of her own accounts, and she revised them with unceasing diligence, in the fear that self-flattery might induce her to pronounce the sentence of peace, when there was no peace.

The time of the little Catherine was divided between two places of abode. She would have been puzzled to decide which she was to consider as her home; but that the servants of an

establishment always kindly exert themselves to remove this perplexity. The child was early instructed by her female attendant to consider herself as an heiress, and was assured that fortunate would be the youth, who should obtain such a beauty, with the estates of Deloraine, for his bride. Catherine loved me much; but she scarcely entertained less affection for the matron to whom her visits abroad were longest and most frequent, and who, to judge from her vivacity, the facility with which she entered into all her juvenile feelings and fancies, and the undiminished lustre of her cheeks and her eyes, might almost be taken for her sister. Mrs. Fanshaw had infinitely the advantage of me as an instructor in one respect, inasmuch as she for ever stood before Catherine as a model of female delicacy. This inestimable friend was a glass in which the child might look, and learn every quality, I might say every motion, that would most become her;

at the same time that the clearness of understanding, and the faultless truth of feeling, with which this lady explained every thing, and inculcated whatever was most worthy to be recollected in the progress through life, were such as I was never tired of admiring, but was never vain enough to imagine I could rival.

Mrs. Fanshaw outlived the friend she so inexpressibly valued ten years. Each time that my daughter returned to me from the gracious and soul-improving visits she paid to this her second mother, I did not fail to remark her added proficiency. Her absences on the score of these visits gave me a fresh happiness in her society. The frailty of our nature is such, that that which presents itself to us each day as surely as the rising of the sun, never fails to be rated by us below its value, and to be regarded with a degree of negligence and apathy. For myself, I certainly cannot boast of a competi-

tion with the gifted female in the story-book, who could hear the grass grow. If my child had been with me uninterruptedly, I could not so well have marked her advancement. I do not doubt that with every day of her life she in various ways improved; but I should not have seen it. But now, that she came home to me it may be after five or six weeks' absence, I immediately observed that she was another, yet the same. There was more breadth in her gestures, and new intelligence in her eye. Each happy day, that I understood, as it advanced, would bless me with the return of my Catherine, was a day of jubilee to me. When the carriage rolled up the avenue, when I hastened over the broad staircase to receive her, and she flew with light and elastic swiftness to my embrace, this little scene, which words can scarcely express, was like a new opening in the clouds, a new light spread over the horizon.

Before the death of Mrs. Fanshaw, my child

had completed her thirteenth year. In females an air of consciousness and maturity comes earlier than in my own sex. With what new wonder and exultation did I now regard my daughter! She had been my plaything; she was now my friend. I had been accustomed to talk to her in a baby style, coming down from the marvellous elevation of a masculine understanding to the level of the battledore and the bilbo-catch. But now I could reason with her; and often and often I derived new lights from her unassuming and random suggestions. Now she could feel my feelings, sympathise with my joys and my sorrows, and be in the noblest sense my companion.

My life had not all been spent during this period in the mansion of Deloraine. I had migrated at something like the ordinary seasons to the metropolis. I had mixed in the fashionable and the political world. In one instance I had accepted a public mission to one of the

courts in the North of Europe, and had discharged the office intrusted to me to the satisfaction of the government that employed me. But my country-seat was the favourite place of my residence. Each time I returned to it with a new zest. My turn of mind led me to the secluded and domestic scene; and in this sense I was "never less alone than when alone." I loved my books; I loved my pen; I loved my solitary rambles through the woods, and the endless train of my visions and meditations.

CHAPTER VI.

When Mrs. Fanshaw died, she had a sister who lived abroad with her husband and a family of daughters, sometimes in the South of France, and sometimes in different parts of Italy. Believing that my daughter would be in a somewhat forlorn situation upon the death of her female protector, this lady invited the young Catherine to come and spend a few months with her young people. The first emotion I felt on the receipt of this invitation was chagrin. Catherine was more than ever necessary to me; and I had imagined that, when Mrs. Fanshaw died, I should scarcely have had cause to part with her again.

But upon second thoughts I condemned the selfishness of the hope and wish I had entertained. My child must not be for ever shut up with her father. I did not indeed live entirely out of the world. But I was not the most eligible protector of her growing years; and it is almost universally admitted, that a residence in different cities on the continent, an observation of the manners and national characters of the kingdoms of the earth, and a familiarity with their languages and modes of thinking acquired on the spot, have the happiest effect in finishing the education of youth of either the male or female sex. It happened that a family with which I had been on terms of cordial acquaintance for years, was on the point of setting out for the very city where the sister of Mrs. Fanshaw resided; and I gladly accepted the opportunity which their overture presented, for transporting my favourite in safety, and under the most eli-

gible circumstances, to the place of her destination.

I received letters from my daughter from Paris, from Lyons, from Turin, and the different cities she visited on her route. The pleasure these letters conveyed to me was more than can easily be conceived. I loved her handwriting, which was regular and delicate in an uncommon degree. I loved even her way of folding a letter. I kissed the impression of an allegorical seal, suspended to a watch which had once been her mother's, and was now hers. The tender recollection of Emilia and her Catherine went to my heart as I viewed it. I never beheld it, without feeling my eyes suffused with a tear of affection.

It is surprising in how many and in what unexpected ways the dear girl expressed her regard for me as she wrote. But love was not the only subject of her epistles. She set before my eyes by a few picturesque touches the pro-

vinces she passed through, the busy scenes of Parisian life, the rich plains of Languedoc, and the sublime and terrific precipices of the Alps. She spoke of the societies into which she was introduced. There was nothing, or there appeared to me to be nothing, of empty and common-place in her remarks. She saw every thing with eyes of the truest taste and the most impressive sensibility. Whoever was allowed the perusal of her letters would immediately observe in them, that she seized by a sort of divine intuition the clue which gave to every thing its just explanation and its becoming arrangement. Whatever she spoke of seemed under her observation to exhibit a delicacy, a vividness, a sweetness, for which it was indebted to the disposition of her that wrote concerning it. When she breathed upon roses, they assumed an added fragrancy. The places she visited I had also seen; I recollected the main outline; but in her descrip-

tion it was as if the pencil of Claude or of Gaspar Poussin had passed over the landscape, and brought forth at one point and another hidden beauties, which but for their inspiration would never have been revealed. As I read her communications, I became reconciled to the temporary loss of her society. I saw what infinite advantage she was gaining from this admirable unfolding of her faculties. I felt that it would have been foul sacrilege to have deprived her of opportunities which afforded her so rich and golden a harvest. She remained abroad with this family nearly six years.

It was during the absence of my daughter on the continent, that I was attacked with a fever of the most dangerous nature. It was a species of typhus. It was accompanied with great depression of spirits, a want of power to interest myself in any object of pursuit, a disinclination to engage in amusement and to all kinds of exertion, and a total want of appetite.

Life seemed incapable of yielding excitement, and existence was a burthen to me. My nights were without sleep and restless; a low fever appeared to be undermining my vital functions. My flesh gradually wasted away; the colour of my skin became dark and inky; death seemed advancing upon me by sure and unremitting strides; and, though consciousness, or more properly the power of receiving impressions, remained, my outward appearance in many respects scarcely differed from that of a corpse.

After a course of several weeks the fever subsided; but it left me in a state of such extreme debility, that it was judged more than probable that death would be the result. I did not however die. But it was long, very long, before I recovered any degree of strength, or was strictly speaking out of danger. My appearance was that of a walking ghost: and all who shrunk from the alarm of a *memento*

mori, shunned to encounter me. I seemed like a person dug up from a grave; and it was a long time before I could walk across my room without help. By degrees I was got down stairs, and into my garden, where it was a great refreshment to sit on the benches, to inhale the balmy air, and to enjoy the pleasing warmth of the sun. An easy chair proceeding gently upon the lawns of my garden, or the slopes of the park, was the next step in my recovery.

I was anxious that my daughter should not be made acquainted with the danger of my condition. She was eligibly situated with young ladies of her own age. Her mind was opening and expanding among the new countries and scenery that she visited. Of what use could she be to me, if she were at home? She was too young for a nurse; and I felt happy that she was spared the gloomy and depressing scene of a sick chamber, and, as it

might be, of a death-bed. Near as I had been to the gates of the grave, I was led to reflect on the situation in which she would be left, if deprived of her sole surviving parent, and to revise the provisions I had already made for the years of her minority, in case that event should occur.

My recovery once ascertained, I proceeded with sure, but lingering steps in the reestablishment of my health. I travelled by very short stages from one place to another, thus procuring to myself moderate excitement without fatigue. I staid sometimes two or three days in a place, or went forward without interval, as fancy or convenience suggested. During my route I passed the country-seats of several persons with whom I was more or less upon familiar terms, but I visited none. I could not have borne the disquiet which such scenes would have produced, or submitted to the observance and attention to others which

they would have imposed upon me. I was accompanied by a young person, the son of an early friend, who was the most accommodating companion in the world. He was all gentleness, all vigilance, of the sweetest temper imaginable. When I was disposed to retire into myself, he took care not to disturb me. When I shewed indications of a frame inclined to communication and amusement, he had a particular adroitness in adapting himself to my humour. He could talk of poetry, of history, of scenery, of arts, and the world. His remarks were not deep, but sensible, utterly free from pretence and affectation, unintrusive, and with that sort of agreeable animation, which frequently attends the morning of life. His society did me a world of good, and I never tired of it.—This person will come again on the stage at a later period of my story.

CHAPTER VII.

My journey was brought to a close for the present at the village of Harrowgate in Yorkshire, a spot frequented in certain seasons of the year for the imputed virtues of its spa, and of which the air is incontestibly salubrious and invigorating. A residence in this place I was assured would be considerably beneficial to me; and the society was easy; every one without remark mixing in it as much or as little as he pleased.

The scene on the whole was highly agreeable to me. The health of the human frame may be considered as a negative attribute, of which we have in a manner no feeling at those

times when we most unequivocally possess it. It is only by comparison that we are enabled to apprehend its value. For myself, I had been so long in a state of deadness and languor, that the simplest enjoyments came to me like the dawn of a new life. The flowers never smelled so sweet, the skies never looked with so celestial a blue; the song of the birds, and the murmur of the waters supplied to me a ravishing gratification. The joy was however short; I soon became exhausted; and then sunk into no unpleasing listlessness. I often fell asleep in the shade, the breezes of heaven playing on my cheek; and my dreams were then all of soft and unexhausted pleasure; the cup no longer overflowing, but the savour and the sense remaining. The very frame and articulations of my body were like a new possession to me; I was agreeably surprised to find my limbs move easily and without pain, and that I once more engrossed in no con-

temptible proportion the attributes of a human being.

Among the persons I encountered at Harrowgate there was one that particularly engaged my attention. This was a young lady of the name of Margaret Borradale. She was of a slight figure, but exquisitely delicate and beautiful. When I met her, she was about three-and-twenty years of age. I was already forty-two. I was told that she had been of a fine complexion, in which the roses and the lilies vied with each other. But the roses were now all faded. Her skin was as fair and as smooth as marble. There was a melancholy in her countenance, the most interesting that can be imagined. Her eyes had entirely lost the light of youth; and she seemed scarcely to notice the things around her.

She was at Harrowgate accompanied by her parents. She went into society, because they desired it; but her thoughts were not in the

places where she was corporeally present. Her air was disconsolate and neglected. She spoke occasionally; she sung; she danced. The melody of her tones was inconceivably touching; her dancing was characterised with a pathetic languor. Those who had been acquainted with her before, described her as the ghost only of the resplendent being they had formerly known; but the ghost presented to you, though in a faint and half-obliterated outline, the image of something inexpressibly engaging. Fancy unavoidably went on to fill out the picture; and the spectator perhaps admired it the more, because it was in some measure his own creation, melting into thin air when the enthusiasm with which you contemplated it was turned away and gone. She was a being not of this world; she was a monumental statue personating the thing that had been; she was like those creatures we read of in the fairy tales, touched by the wand of a malignant enchanter,

condemned never again to mix in the realities of life, but still retaining a portion, however incomplete, of vitality and sense, still mournful and sad, and destined never to rise again into interest and energy and hope.

Her story was a sad one. She had been crossed in love. Her father had been a younger brother. He had married imprudently; and he had brought up his daughter in great retirement, and in a way little calculated to stir up in her ambitious thoughts. They lived on an income of a few hundreds a year. Their residence was among villagers; and the first hints of youthful affection were awakened in her bosom towards a stripling of her own age, who resided at a short distance from her father's dwelling, named William. He was the only son of his mother. He had been some years absent under the care of an uncle; but, upon the death of his father, a simple farmer, in the occupation of two hundred acres of land,

he was recalled to the parental roof, that he might be the stay, the comforter and assistant of her who bore him. He was eighteen, a blooming youth, with active limbs, dark-brown, curling hair, and a heart, the softest and gentlest that ever dwelt in a human bosom. His uncle had been the member of a college, and William had gained a larger range of ideas, and much intellectual improvement, while he lived under the guidance of this relative.

Had he been uninterruptedly the neighbour of Margaret, they would neither of them perhaps have been so much struck with the other. But, as it was, their feelings were those of ancient neighbourhood, combined with the novelty that is peculiar to love at first sight. They had been playfellows; and they felt the confidence and familiarity which that relation, when connected with agreeable qualities and accordant dispositions, seldom fails to produce. And yet, meeting, as they now did, after

years of separation, neither of them could think the other the same being as at the period at which they parted. Their former familiarity had been that of children, without apprehension, without consciousness, the mere exuberance of youthful spirits, void of all feeling of sex, except as the party more robust of muscle and limb is instinctively delicate in his treatment of the frailer flower, and as the female, with an obscure and undefined anticipation of the scenes of after-life, occasionally practises a few coquettries, or imposes a task on her more athletic associate, or ridicules his awkwardnesses, or laughs him out of some fit of unseasonable gravity.

But now, in the renewed acquaintance of the two, they each felt that they were entering upon a more important scene of existence. They did not suppose, as is frequently the case in the buoyant and idler hours of youth, that each day was a duration by itself, cut off from

all that had preceded or might follow, and that what was done in each successive period involved no consequences, and imparted no colour of its own to what was to come. They felt that life was a serious affair, that whatever they did had a responsibility attached to it, and might mark for good or for evil the character or fortune of the party that acted, or the party that was the object of what was done. They looked into it therefore with a keener eye and a more awakened mind. Their apprehension was alive. Sometimes they blushed; sometimes their speech faltered and was broken; and sometimes, even when they smiled, or laughed outright with unrestrained gaiety, there was more passed on one side or the other, than any external indications gave expression to.

William and Margaret were the same as they had been in the early years of their acquaintance. They were the same; and yet

how different! The comparison was as between the rosebud, and the flower still young, fresh and untarnished, but arrayed with all the glory that nature out of her inexhausted storehouse is accustomed to bestow. It was in the manner of the metamorphoses of the ancient mythology. If narrowly examined, you detected the identity; the elements were what they had previously been. But, oh, how resplendent was the form which now presented itself! There was the same sweetness of disposition, ever accommodating, officious and complying, the same frankness, the same generosity, the same warmth of spirit and congeniality of soul; but how expanded, how assured, how full of tender heart and pregnant meaning!

As they dwelt near each other, they encountered every day, perhaps several times in a day. The unrestrained intercourse in which they lived, had however one singular effect.

That which might be done at any time, still remained undone. They in fact scarcely adverted to the situation in which they were mutually placed. They were lost a thousand fathoms deep in love, before they knew that they loved. They were happy in each other's presence; they were uneasy and restless in absence. They dwelt on each other's voice; they repeated each other's words; their dreams had but one subject; the principal person in those wild plots which make the story of our sleeping hours, was still the same. If they read, they each imagined the other to be at hand, and did not so much consider how the reflections and paintings of the author affected themselves, as how they would be received by the other. Their union of hearts was like a deep, pellucid stream, which, flowing over an even bed, and meeting with no interruption, passed on unnoticed; while the same stream, if opposed, or on uneven ground, leaping from

rock to rock, would shew that it was omnipotent, and that no power on earth had strength to arrest its progress. They talked of every thing out of themselves; the beauties of nature, the beauties of literature, the irregularities of climate, the change of the seasons, the flowers, the crops, the animals. They were both botanists; both delighted to observe the various habits and instincts of the animal creation. They were both fond of music. They sometimes sang in concert, and at other times called in the aid of the instrumental to give variety and copiousness to the natural music of the voice. William became the instructor of Margaret, a little in language, more in science and matters of literary taste; and it is well known how critical the relation of tutor and pupil often becomes between persons of opposite sexes, when both are just advanced on the threshold of life.

It is indeed specially characteristic of the

passion of love, that it has the faculty of giving a perpetual flow to the interchange of sentiments and reflections in conversation. The parties feel no reserve with each other; they are eager to communicate every thing that is new; no remark seems insignificant; and every thing that is said is sure to experience a favourable reception. They learn more and more to think alike; and it is scarcely in human nature that we should feel weariness or disgust in hearing our own sentiments articulated by the lips of our companion. This is a genuine and natural echo, that will be listened to for ever. Between lovers the modulations of the voice are always delightful in the one who speaks to the one who hears; and the expressive varieties of the countenance, the gesticulations of sentiment, of gaiety, of tenderness, of disapprobation, of light-heartedness and frolic mirth, afford endless occasions of observation and interest.

CHAPTER VIII.

In this manner the days of these lovers, for such they were, glided on in an Elysian tranquillity, till a mere accident had the effect of producing a striking change in their situation. The mother of William had been absent for several weeks, on a visit to a friend who dwelt at a distance of one hundred and fifty miles. William, as I have already said, was the stay, the comforter and assistant of her who bore him, and had been recalled to her side by the decease of his father. He amply supplied to her the place of the protector she had lost. He had always been remarked for his duty as a child; and now, that his mother had no other

domestic friend, he had greatly increased in his assiduity and affection towards her. They were all the world to each other, with no considerable exception, unless the embryo and unexplained passion he entertained for Margaret. The time was come when he expected his mother to return; the day of her arrival was fixed; and William was to proceed some miles upon the road, to meet her and escort her home. The hour of meeting drew nigh; and the youth had already gone to the stable, and was about to harness his horse to the simple vehicle, in which he was accustomed to accompany his mother in her little recreations, when a messenger arrived with a letter, informing him that an unexpected circumstance had occurred, which would oblige her to defer her return from the Wednesday to the Saturday following.

In the little *ménage* of the widow's house, the absence of the mistress was of course

strongly felt: she and her son had been accustomed to sit down with no other companion to their simple board. He had felt his late solitary state as a privation; he had counted upon the return of his mother as upon one of the bright days in his calendar. He had taken care to have the house "swept and garnished" in the way that he knew would please her best. He had the garden put in the exactest order, and a few vases containing those productions of Flora which were her special favourites, ranged in the window. He had begun to watch the weather, and to count the hours. He called over the little events of the house and the homestead, which he was sure it would gratify her to hear, and eagerly anticipated the pleasure it would give him to encounter her well-known and much-loved features, and to light up the smile of maternal approbation in her venerated countenance. It therefore struck a damp upon him, to have this near approaching

delight deferred even for three days. He murmured. He felt that all the mighty store of his affection and attachment had been waked up, and brought into unusual activity, to be now repressed with blank disappointment.

He had no sooner perused the billet of his mother, than he shut the stable-door, went to the house to announce the altered arrangement to their female domestic, and sauntered into the fields. Mechanically he turned his steps to a knoll, which had been a favourite haunt of himself and Margaret. The young person who was the object of his secret partiality, knew the way in which his morning was destined to be employed, and proposed to herself the pleasure, unseen and alone, of remarking the little features of the scene, all of which were in so many ways associated with her William. She expected no interruption, and was fully disposed to give way to her feelings after that mode, which we only employ

when we imagine ourselves secure against the being witnessed by human eye or ear. Solitude has its special prerogatives; and we talk to ourselves, where solitude reigns, in a franker, I had almost said a tenderer style, than we indulge in to the brother of our soul, or to the mistress of our most secret affections.

As Margaret felt certain that William was at a distance, so William, persuaded that at this time he could not be expected near the accustomed brow, had not the slightest anticipation of meeting her. He had been pondering upon his mother. He had been calling up all the little circumstances and thoughts with which he had purposed to gratify her at meeting. From thence his mind had wandered to the recollection of his infant days, and so forward even to the hour of his present review. So far as his mother was concerned, it was all delightful. He remembered her anxieties, the vigilance with which she had ever provided for

his welfare and comfort, how she had smoothed for him the pillow of sickness, the tears she had shed over his disappointments, the sweet smiles which had illumined her countenance when she saw him entering with full relish into such pleasures as she provided, or as occurred in the simple scheme of their life. His heart was entirely open. His thoughts were unclad even with that simple armour of which we are almost never divested in any of the intercourses of society. His bosom was laid bare, and seemed to court the gentle, yet enlivening and health-giving breeze, with which the year in its most genial moments visits the breast of mortals.

He had proceeded for some time with his arms folded, or with his left hand on his chin, in that attitude into which we inadvertently fall, when we are in the act of recollecting something which had almost escaped us. Anon he spread his hands abroad in the fulness of his

emotion. His step was irregular, and would occasionally grow rapid as if he trod on air. He stopped again. His eyes would then be cast upwards, with the kind of devotion we feel, without being aware of it, in the remembrance of that for which we might well be thankful to the mysterious power, which "careth for us" in things in which we are least able to care for ourselves. His cheeks glowed with pleasure. His eyes were moist with that soft suffusion which comes over mortals, when most impressed with the joys of affectionate sentiment. Margaret perceived him; her first emotion was that of surprise at seeing him there, which was succeeded by an impulse to observe him, that made her for some time careful neither by sound nor gesture to break in upon the current of his thoughts. She was very near him, still without being remarked.

Suddenly, by the mere effect of accident, he

turned his eye, and saw the beloved of his soul. There was a stile between them. With the rapidity of agile youth he vaulted over it. "With love's light wings did he o'erperch" this trivial obstacle, and in a moment was by her side. His soul was already harmonised to every thing that was tender, and frank, and ingenuous. This was an instant in which all reserve was out of the question. He could not but speak all he felt. He had a window in his bosom, less for the use of the bystander than for his own, in which he could read all secret things, thoughts which even to his own spirit had been hitherto unknown. It is of the nature of the human mind, that one emotion flows into another of a similar species; and small is the interval between the love of a son for his mother, and the love of a swain for the mistress of his affections. His soul was worked up to the highest pitch by the musings that had occupied his mind; the spirit of Margaret

had been elated, as she stood mutely contemplating the emotions and the loveliness of her friend. The sentiments of the one flowed into the channel and swelled the stream of the sentiments of the other. It was like the meeting of rivers, the marriage of the Thames and the Medway, as commemorated by the poet,

> Whose blended waters are no more distinguished,
> But roll unto the sea one common flood.

My Margaret! exclaimed William, are you here? Oh, what can make me happier than this encounter? I did not know before, how much I loved you.—Yes, loved you!

> Dearer than eyesight, space and liberty,
> Beyond what can be valued rich or rare.

Till now, I knew only the pleasure I enjoyed when we were together. I attended only to what you said, the sweetness of your tones, the ineffable beauty of your looks. But now I think of you, of the spring from which these

transcendent excellencies arise. I think of you as that without which I cannot live. I must have you perpetually near me, familiar as the air I breathe, indefeasible as the vital heat which gives me existence, and is my existence. The glances of your eye, the smiles of your countenance, the tones of your voice, constitute my nourishment; all else is vegetation; but this is happiness. This only gives me power to think, to act, and to enjoy. I cannot bear to be without your presence; or, whenever I am so, the time must be short; only as long as the frame of mind you have given me can continue unimpaired. You must be every thing to me; I must be the thing you love best. Till now I never made love to you. I thought only of you as the most inestimable of friends. I was restrained by ideas of decorum. I was afraid lest, if I overstepped a certain bound, your delicacy might take the alarm. But now I can be silent no longer. I under-

stand my own sentiments; the veil that hid me from my observation is removed.—You must not be offended with me; you will not be offended; for, if I continued silent, I should die.

CHAPTER IX.

It was not long after this that a circumstance occurred, in which William had the good fortune of apparently saving the life of Margaret. She had been engaged in a casual visit to a young female of her own age, who lived little more than a mile from the abode of her parents. On her return the girl had accompanied her part of the way home. Soon after they separated, Margaret had occasion to enter and pass through a field into which thirty or forty oxen had been turned to graze. Unfortunately she had a little dog with her, that was the ordinary companion of her perambulations. The animals that fed in the field are not indeed so

formidable and ferocious as bulls; but, like bulls, they feel the effect of the season of the year, and at certain periods are more gamesome and ungovernable than is their ordinary wont. Margaret had not been without adverting to the hazard which might attend her passing through this field. She caught up the dog in her arms, which was indeed no other than a lap-dog, and with this precaution concluded that she should proceed without accident. But the dog felt something of the same sort of stimulus to which the cattle were subject. There is a sympathy in these creatures, by which they understand each other's minds in a way that we cannot explain. The dog became restless, and with a sudden spring escaped from his mistress's arms, and was in the midst of his enemies in a moment. With his yelping and barking, and flying in this direction and that, he compelled their attention and annoyed them. The tables then speedily became turned.

The aggressor was filled with terror; and the pursued were now the pursuers. The cattle, excited first by the irritation and impertinence of their assailant, and next stimulated by society and imitation and the common impulse which pervaded the whole herd, entered into a confederate rally against the foe. As the cause that moved them had more in it of disturbance than terror, they played a thousand antics, and ramped about the field, still however from moment to moment forming a closer line of advance.

It happened that the field was circumscribed on one side by the course of the river Severn, and that its verge in that quarter was a cliff descending towards the water, and of surface almost perpendicular. The cattle were on the other side of the field. The dog, when he found that he had roused a whole host of enemies, ran to his mistress for protection. The animals pursued. Margaret immediately became aware

of her danger. What would be the issue she knew not. The oxen continued to direct their attention and vengeance against the dog. Whether they would ultimately come to regard her and the dog as leagued in a common cause, and alike meriting their hostility, was uncertain. Their horns, if they sought to wreak their injury on her, were weapons not to be set light by. The least evil that could happen was that she would be thrown down, and trampled on successively by the feet of the whole herd. But she had no time for reflection; she retreated as they advanced; they pressed upon her closer and closer; they drove her to the edge of the precipice; the ground gave way under her feet; and she fell from a height of sixty or seventy feet.

William was in a boat on the river, at no great distance from the shore, for the purpose of fishing. He saw the scene that was going on, though very imperfectly. He saw the

cattle in the field in an extraordinary state of commotion and violence. He saw the figure of a female who seemed as it were in the midst of the herd; there was an indefinable something in her appearance, which suggested to him the idea of his Margaret. What it could be that introduced such a thought into his mind, it is difficult to conceive. The whole was so foreshortened and contracted by distance, that the cattle were scarcely bigger than kittens new yeaned, and the rooks and crows, that seemed to be disturbed by the scene, and were taking their flight over the river, shewed like so many insects. But the truth of the suggestion that thus arose in his mind, was not required to rouse him to exertion, and to advance towards the spot. He could scarcely doubt that what he saw was a young female in imminent distress and peril.

In a moment he forced his boat on the beach, and leaped ashore. Swifter than thought he

began to climb the opposed ascent. Accustomed to scenes of rural exertion, his limbs had an almost unparalleled nimbleness and agility. He was ready to accomplish what the poet speaks of, and "run up a hill perpendicular." He had climbed but a small part of the ascent, and was endeavouring, by means of catching at a stunted and gnarled shrub that had struck its roots into a fissure of the rock, to give himself breath and strength for a further start, when he saw the unhappy girl tumbling with frightful velocity over the precipice, and threatening to fall almost upon his head.

It is one of the marvellous properties of the human mind, that, while on ordinary occasions the march of our ideas seems to go on at a certain steady and prescribed pace, we are no sooner placed in a situation of peculiar and unprecedented excitement, than our souls, so to speak, break away at once from the routine to which they are accustomed, and think a mil-

lion of thoughts in a moment, not in a wild, incoherent and hurried train, but with all their incidents and reasonings. The very inebriation, as it were, of our spirits, steadies and sobers us. The man who would escape from a house on fire, bursts through bars and bolts which on any other occasion he would have judged proof against ten times his power, and, like Samson in the Bible, ropes twisted a hundred fold, are in his hands "as flax that had been burned." His whole energy and resolve becomes as one concentrated effort; and he possesses at once the penetration of a sage, and the strength of a giant.

The female, as she fell from the summit of the rock, would have descended directly on the head of William; but he steadied his body, by the hold, as was already said, of the shrub which was rooted on its surface, and fixed his eye with intent gaze on the falling figure. As it approached, he swayed himself head and

shoulders to one side, and then, stretching out the hand that was free on the other, succeeded in catching hold of some of the girl's garments. This action arrested the progress of her fall for an instant; but in the next the momentum and impulse which was thus given to the young man, proved too strong for the slender support the shrub afforded, and William and Margaret were hurried together down to the path below. What remained however of the descent was comparatively small; the frightful velocity with which Margaret had been falling was effectually checked, and the force with which she would otherwise have reached the plain, was no longer fatal. She received some bruises in the fall, but they were inconsiderable. By some mischance which it is impossible accurately to explain, William was found to have dislocated his shoulder. Several workmen were near the spot below, where the accident terminated; and the female and her deliverer were speedily con-

veyed to a place of safety. After the reduction of the dislocated limb, William wore his arm for some time in a sling; and the sensibilities of both parties towards each other experienced a considerable addition from the adventure of that day. Margaret felt that she was indebted for her life to the gallantry, the discretion and firmness which William had put forth at the moment: the scarf that he wore was to her a permanent memorial and an affecting trophy of his exploit. That they had thus been united on an occasion of so extraordinary peril, mutually endeared them to each other. The scene occurred to them again and again on both sides in their dreams. The deliverer and the delivered fondly dwelt on each other's excellencies and virtues in their waking contemplations: they were all the world to each other. To two persons who had passed through so terrible a trial together, the idea of their ever hereafter being separated and becoming indiffe-

rent to each other, was little less than blasphemy. The pulses of their hearts beat in entire harmony; they were like the twins I have somewhere read of, who on whatever kingdom or shore of the earth they were cast, however separated by mountains, deserts, and tracts of the unbounded sea, felt each other's sensations, were subjected to the same infirmities, sickened with the same disease, and at one indivisible instant expired, the spirit which animated them returning at once to its place.

CHAPTER X.

I HAVE already mentioned that the father of Margaret, though living at present in the most unaffected rural simplicity, still retained the notion that he belonged to another class, and was of a higher order of beings, than the inglorious neighbourhood by which he was surrounded. Since he had been discarded by his more opulent relatives, he had indeed sought to make a virtue of necessity, and had pretended, even perhaps to his own heart, to "scorn delights, and live laborious days," to be fully reconciled to his lot, and to think of himself no better than the village hinds in the midst of whom he dwelt. But the spark of ambi-

tion, though smothered in him, was not extinct; favourable circumstances might yet fan it into a flame.

Such circumstances occurred. Lord Borradale, the head of his house, had heard of the beauty of Margaret. He resided at a distance in the North of England; and, when his kinsman, the father of Margaret, had been discarded by his family, pride, or shame, or some similar feeling, had impelled *him* to retire into the West. Lord Borradale was a man of the most cultivated taste; but of a singularly cold and unimpassioned heart. In early life he had been a great traveller; he had visited France and Italy, and had even passed into Greece and the East in search of the remains of ancient architecture and art. He had been careful to take with him draughtsmen and designers, who should enable him to bring away an exact representation of the most approved models. He shipped off for his native seat a large col-

lection of fragments, however imperfect, of statues, that were supposed to be the works of Phidias and Praxiteles.

When at length he ceased from his wanderings, and resolved henceforth to take up his principal residence on the lands of his ancestors, the first thing upon which he resolved was to rase to the ground the mansion which had been built by them in the reign of Henry the Third, and which from age to age they had piously preserved and beautified. He then set himself to fix on a spot about half a mile removed from the site of the old house, that appeared to him better to correspond with the suggestions of Italian taste. He studied indefatigably the delineations and rules of Vitruvius and Palladio. And, when at length he had built himself a house to his mind, he began to adorn it with such furniture, statues and pictures, as he thought would redound most to the credit of his taste. In particular he had

constructed a spacious gallery, which by its sinuosities might conduct the wandering spectator to the inspection of still new and inexhaustible beauties.

Lord Borradale had one son, an only child. His lordship knew that he should not himself live for ever; and therefore he directed some of his principal anxieties to this son. If he died without issue, the estate would fall into the hands of a distant branch; and they might pay no respect to the improvements he had achieved, and the wonders he had collected. From his son, bred under his eye, he expected a better taste, and hoped for a more filial regard. And he was anxious in future generations still to hand down the monuments, which owed their existence or their locality to his exertions.

While he was thus employed, and such were the subjects of his contemplations, it happened by some accident that a miniature of Margaret

fell into his hands. He regarded it as of exquisite beauty; the features appeared to him to be moulded upon the purest Grecian examples. The thought struck him that nothing was wanting to complete his columns and porticoes, and the succession and variety of his statues, but the placing the person from whom this miniature was drawn at the head of his circle. He therefore delayed not a moment to open a negotiation with her father. He commissioned an artist of high character to proceed to the neighbourhood of her residence, to furnish him with a whole-length portrait of the maiden with whose features he had been so powerfully struck. And, presently following in person, he brought about an interview with her father, to whom he communicated the project he had conceived. This poor, but rootedly ambitious man, was but too easily seduced to listen to the proposition. The idea of being placed at his ease in point of ex-

penditure, of being associated with persons of rank, and seeing his daughter united to the heir of the elder branch of his house, had charms in his eyes which he felt himself unable to resist. His wife, a woman of good dispositions, but who had never been accustomed to contradict the will of her husband, was with little difficulty prevailed upon to enter into his views: and a consultation was speedily held, how most effectually to put an end to what they were now willing to call the unworthy amour in which their daughter had been engaged.

The plan fixed on for this purpose was to lose no time to accomplish the removal of Margaret and her family from the western province, where she had been born, and had spent her earlier years to the present moment, to a cottage which was tendered to their acceptance upon the estate of lord Borradale. The motive for this removal was for some time

kept a secret. Margaret regretted the distance which would thus be interposed between her and the polestar of her affections; but she was totally unsuspicious of the design which prompted this revolution. The lovers bade each other adieu with a mournful feeling; a sad anticipation beset them, as the carriage approached which was to convey Margaret to a distant home. Scarcely a day had passed for the preceding twelve months without some personal communication; now it was uncertain when they should meet again. They promised each other however a perpetual commerce of letters; they promised that at a certain hour of every day they would not fail, however circumstanced, to retire that they might think of each other. The consolation on both sides would be inexpressibly great, that was afforded by the consciousness, "Now my William—now my Margaret is employed in the contemplation of our mutual loves: we cannot see

each other's features, we cannot hear each other's voice with the gross organs of sense; but we can with the organs of the mind. He speaks, I answer; he replies, I rejoin: shall not this mitigate to us the sorrows of absence?"

They mutually vowed to each other, that their separation should not endure: the following spring should put an end to it, and unite them for ever. The father saw with astonishment and alarm the strength of their attachment. He had not the courage, he did not think it the wisest way, to oppose the tide of affection in its full career. He judged that new scenes and new connections would do the business more effectually. Amidst the splendours of Borradale-Castle Margaret would speedily forget the low and inglorious pleasures she had once prized on the banks of the Severn. It could not be, that the noble blood that flowed in her veins should not, in the

favourable position in which she was about to be placed, assert its origin. All, the old man assured himself, would go well; and the triumph he aspired to would only be the better secured, by his pursuing it in caution and silence. His praise would be like that of Fabius in the Roman story, who by deferring the contest and avoiding a battle, accomplished the overthrow of Hannibal.

They accordingly proceeded on their journey, and finally reached in safety the *cottage ornée* that was provided for them. They had scarcely unpacked their moveables, and admired the elegant accommodations of the residence which had been prepared for them, when lord Borradale and his son appeared, to welcome their arrival, and to conduct them on a visit to the seat of their ancestors. Margaret could not but admire to a certain degree the magnificence of what she saw. It was all in a manner new to her; and much of it had an

elegance, a beauty and a taste, that forcibly appealed to the soundness and purity of her power of perception.

But such was by no means the case with the youth who offered himself to her approbation. He was coxcombical, empty and conceited. He had in a certain degree the faculty to learn and to imitate. But he had not the soil of the mind: all that he learned lay like manure upon a hungry and impenetrable surface. It never mixed with the stratum beneath, and only deformed what under kindlier circumstances it might have enriched, and have rendered both ornamental and useful. He was incapable of sympathy and generous feeling. He was not indeed ill-natured; but he was pedantic, and formal, and thought only of himself. He would have appeared to more advantage, if he had taken less pains. If he had given nature her way, he would at least not have been offensive. But he was perpetually studying

how he should present himself, and how to make the most advantageous impression. With all this he was very slenderly endowed with the gifts of the mind. But his phrases were studied; his gestures full of affectation; he could not laugh or smile but by rule. He was essentially a dull person. He could never learn the things his father desired to have him learn; he was incapable of any thing liberal or noble; but he was apt and adroit in imitating the weaknesses and follies of those among whom he lived. The figure he presented therefore was all in shadow; there were no striking lights that fell upon it; nothing was firm or great; it was all obscure, misty and opake. Yet he never intended any harm; he was incapable of malignity. His only fault was that of an exuberant self-sufficiency. He was insipid, but pert. At the same time he was unboundedly pliant to whatever his father dictated to him. Lord Borradale told him

that it was proper and suitable that he should marry his cousin; and he was prepared to go through the forms, and make her his bride.

It may easily be conceived what a contrast he presented in the eyes of Margaret to the youth she had left in the West. William was all fire and soul. Every thing he said was pregnant with sense, and still more abounded with feeling. He was impetuous; and he was natural. He never considered twice of what he should say, or what he should do. His first thoughts were full of understanding, and still more of grace. Margaret and he understood each other intuitively, and almost without the aid of words. The heir apparent of the barony of Borradale for ever pumped up his thoughts, turned them on every side, and admired them, before they found their way to his lips. With William the days of Margaret flew like hours, and hours like minutes. But between these new companions the conversation on the part

of the admirer was all effort, and on the part of Margaret every thing passed in insupportable languor and fatigue.

There was that in the character of William which resembled witchcraft. He was, so to speak, enshrined in an atmosphere of precious odours, which it was almost impossible for any one to enter, without feeling his senses lulled in pleasing imaginations, and his spirit robbed of tranquil self-possession. But, if this were the case with him in his indifferent and accidental connections, what must it be supposed to have been in relation to Margaret, whose soul had been united to his from infancy, and who, since the terrible adventure of the rock, had felt that she did not so truly belong to herself as to him? She had been on the brink, or more properly in the jaws, of destruction; one moment only was interposed between her and the most frightful catastrophe; he had shewn himself like an intervenient angel, or

rather like a special and miraculous act of Providence, that she might come forth whole and unhurt, and that no injury might assail her. He had risked every thing to accomplish her deliverance, and had sustained much pain and inconvenience that she might be placed in a condition of safety. If Jephthah had vowed to sacrifice his daughter in case God delivered the armies of Ammon into his hands, was she less bound to consecrate her life as a remuneration for the existence, the continuation of which this gallant youth had procured to her?

CHAPTER XI.

GRADUALLY the father of Margaret disclosed to her the scheme, which had furnished the cause of their removal from the banks of the Severn to the vicinity of the Mersey. He represented to her in the most lively colours the degradation and dishonour, for such he esteemed it, in which he had so long vegetated, from even before the birth of his daughter to the present hour. He said that the noble representative of his race, for (it may be) little better than a whim, had now proposed to take off this dishonour, and restore him to his proper station. He adjured Margaret, by all the love she bore him, by the care he had exerted for

her from her earliest infancy, by the indulgences he had never withheld from her slightest wishes, not on the present occasion to make herself the obstacle to the fortune that seemed to smile upon him. He intreated her, that she would assist him to spend the remainder of his days in sunshine and content. What was good fortune to him, would also be good fortune to her. She would be placed in the station which she was so eminently qualified to adorn. She would be the boast and the ornament of her sex; and it was impossible that that which won for her the homage and commendation of all the world, should not also be a source of gratification to her own bosom. Lord Borradale was essentially a cold-hearted man; and, as he had taken them up for a purpose that pleased his own imagination, so he would cast them off without remorse, if he found himself thwarted of that purpose.

The habits of Margaret's life from childhood

to the present hour had been those of filial obedience. There was a gentleness in her nature, that would not suffer her to engage in inflexible controversy against her father. She pleaded with him. She said, You have known of the attachment of myself and William from infancy; you loved him; you brought him to me; you encouraged our attachment. You have observed all the steps by which our earliest and instinctive kindness to each other has been turned into love. You saw it with complacency; you bade me entertain him as my future husband. Now all the preliminaries of this final engagement have passed between us; now we have poured our hearts into each other's bosom; now he has saved my life, and in return I have given him my soul. The happiness of all our future existence depends upon this engagement's not being retracted; I may obey you, but if I do, both I and he shall be made your victims. We shall be two withered plants,

which, while they were tended and fostered and nourished, grew up in strength and beauty, their branches full of sap, their foliage bright and healthful and vigorous, but which shall hereafter be rivelled, naked and unblest, left on the plain two monuments of wretchedness and blast.

The expostulations of Margaret were ineffective to change the purposes of her selfish father. He told her, that this was all the idle romance so characteristic of that early season of life, and that the passions of a boy and girl on the threshold of puberty, as they were impetuous and unsubmissive to reason and restraint, so they were sure to be short-lived and evanescent. He intreated, he adjured her to have compassion upon him. All his early days had been spent in misery, the fruit of a precocious error. The heyday of his life was passed. The evening of his existence was coming on, and demanded its indulgences and its comforts.

She had herself never known any thing but a plain and homely mode of life; but it was different with him; his early years had been passed in the midst of elegance and splendour and luxury. She had only to conquer a fleeting fancy, a mere girlish impulse; and they should all reap the reward. Surely this was a moderate return for all the care he had spent upon her, the love he had borne her, and the anxieties she had cost him from the hour when she began to exist.

These were but feeble arguments, and might with force and advantage have been retorted upon him who urged them. But Margaret was ill qualified for such a contention. She had ever felt the duty she owed her parents as a branch of her religion. Her father had not much passed the meridian of life; but in her eye he was a patriarch. While she was yet an infant, she had viewed him in the full maturity of manhood. As she had advanced in dexterity

and accomplishments, as her mind had opened to the beauties of nature, the magnificence of the universe, and the qualities of the beings around her, as she had shot up in stature, and her form had developed itself, the system of things most assuredly had not stood still with him; and he had passed into another class of mortals, even as she had passed. Deference and honour therefore she believed was his due; she was bound to treat him with the utmost tenderness, and in all things to consult his pleasure. Nor was the present affair a question of imaginary benefit and accommodation; however slightly she might value the mere ornaments and trappings of life, it was not so with her father. In a word, her temper was all gentleness; and the bare thought of entering into warfare with the author of her existence, and by dint of inflexible constancy extorting his slow and unwilling consent, was intolerable to her. If the proposition had been started in

their homely and rustic dwelling on the banks of the Severn, the matter would have been somewhat different. But their removal had already been effected, ere she was aware of its purpose. And that she by her wilfulness and her selfishness, should occasion her father to forfeit the protection and smiles of lord Borradale, and drive him back upon the humble life he detested, was a fault she could never have forgiven herself.

Yet she was not without those feelings, that shrinking back and revulsion, which are inseparable from the passion of love, when the question is of sacrificing its most cherished visions and the object it adores. The image of her William was perpetually before her; she saw him in her dreams, sometimes emphatically and earnestly claiming the performance of that which she had given him cause to expect, and sometimes with a melancholy and wintery countenance, reproaching her for her incon-

stancy, and assuring her that he could not survive the shock that was given him. She counted up his virtues, his manly and generous qualities; she recollected the boundless debt of gratitude she owed him. She could not therefore wholly avoid the shewing her father by her demeanour, or in the expression of her eye and her attitude, how bitterly she would feel the privation, if she should ultimately yield to his wishes.

On the other hand her father was not without his compunctions and his tenderness. Had it been otherwise, she could not have loved him as she indeed loved him. Seeing therefore how much it cost her, he determined, whatever were the consequence, that she should follow the bent of her inclinations. The choice of the partner of her existence was properly her affair, and not his; she would probably long survive him, and therefore her choice of life merited to be preferred. All this he expressed

not by words, but actions. He pressed her no longer; he wore a look of grief and resignation. He ceased to frequent the house of lord Borradale. He ceased to take pleasure in any thing. He wandered about the house and the adjoining fields, "hollow as a ghost,"

As dim and meagre as an ague-fit.

He yielded to his fate, and resolved that his passions and desires, however vehement, should not have the effect to subvert his daughter's happiness.

But this was an issue she could not endure to think of. The less her father pressed her with expostulation and the weight of words, the more she felt herself impelled to yield to the course his wishes pointed out to her. Had it been for herself only, she felt persuaded that she could without a struggle sacrifice her own preferences on the altar of filial duty. But she dreaded the mischief which the disappointment would inflict on William. She had no right to

trifle with his peace; and, in return for all his love and all he had done for her, to entail upon him the miseries of perpetual grief. With the ingenuousness that so eminently distinguished her, she resolved to write to him on the subject, and to set before him without reserve the perplexities that assailed her. She addressed him as follows:

My friend,

Allow me to invoke you by that appellation, for any other would be foreign to the purpose of this letter. I loved you; I love you. All the visions of happiness I ever formed, included you, and the joys that I believed would be my lot if we were united to each other. But we are not born for ourselves alone. I had a duty to the author of my existence, older in its date, even than the hour when first I had the happiness to know you. It has been the ambition of my heart to pass through life irreproachably. If my faculties were so confined as to enable

me to do little good, I might at least hope to avoid the actual perpetration of evil. I feel that I could never endure the miseries of self-reproach. If I were to see my father suffering the mischiefs of disappointment and a broken heart by any wilfulness of mine, my existence would from that moment become insupportable to me. I could never be an instrument of pleasure and contentment to another, for the worm of undying remorse would prey upon me for ever.

I write to you at the present moment with a certain degree of confidence, to intreat you to second my virtuous resolutions. You are perhaps the only being I know on the face of the earth, from whom I could expect such disinterestedness and magnanimity. Release me, I intreat you, from the unspeakable obligations you have conferred on me, from the promises I have made you, from the prospects of future felicity which your partial thoughts may have

created to you out of the idle and visionary talk, castles in the air, in which we have mutually participated. Whatever I have promised you, has had, if not for its expressed, at least for its implied condition, the consent of my father. Our attachment grew up under his auspices. It proceeded with his knowledge, and could boast his entire and hearty concurrence. This concurrence he has withdrawn. I do not enter into the question whether this change in his views is founded in wisdom. I am not my father's director; and have no right to arraign the sentiments he forms, and the wishes he entertains, at the tribunal of my judgment. It is enough that there they are, there they will remain, and it is not in my power to reverse them.

Is it not better for us to do what is right, than to yield to what we inordinately desire? I do not apply this rule to my father: for he has, as well as all other human beings, and, to

my apprehension, and as far as I am concerned, more than any other human being, a right to be the judge of the conduct he shall pursue. But I do apply it to myself. I am sure I shall have more internal peace, and more unalloyed and entire resignation, in obeying my conscience, than in pursuing the promptings of my will. I think, William, that you are formed like me. It is this thought that lies at the foundation of the unreserved attachment I have entertained for you, and the perpetual satisfaction I anticipated (if Providence had favoured our views) in being united to you. You love therefore what is right, even as I love it; and, when I call on you to concur with me in this most important crisis of my life, I therefore do you no violence.

I require however, my dear William, your agreement in this great act of filial duty. I have entered into such engagements to you, not only in the secret recesses of my own

mind, but in speech, in countenance, and in the accord of all the powers of my frame, that you and you only can release me from the engagements I have formed. I am like to one who, "on double business bound, stands in pause" in which direction he shall proceed, and how he shall comport himself, and can perform no essential duty on the theatre of life. Release me, I conjure you. Snap the chain which, as long as it subsists, renders me incapable of any thing decisive, any thing that I should look back upon with satisfaction and complacency. Assist me in the sacrifice I feel myself called upon to make. Let us together approach this altar, consecrated to fortitude and disinterested virtue, and offer up our own dearest wishes to a principle, without an obedience to which I feel that I can never escape the bitterest self-accusation and remorse.

CHAPTER XII.

When Margaret had finished, and had dispatched this letter, she felt herself more at her ease. She had put a violence on herself, and achieved a conquest, of the practicability of which in her case nothing could have assured her, short of the actual experiment. This, when the experiment was completed, was her first feeling. But, the next day, and the day after, her satisfaction abated. Having discharged to the full her duty to her father, and prepared for the event against which her very soul revolted, she began to think principally, almost exclusively, of her lover. She set herself to calculate the time at which her letter

would reach him, and at which she might receive his answer. She thought of his surprise, the distresses he would suffer, the fatal blow he would sustain, and the upbraidings with which he would overwhelm her.

The result however was more trying to him than any thing that she had anticipated. When the letter of Margaret came to his hands, it found him attending the death-bed of his mother. Only a few weeks had elapsed from the period when they had taken leave of the Borradales. In a retreat so thinly scattered with inhabitants as was that where William and his mother resided, the removal of one family to which they had been bound in the ties of sympathetic and intimate intercourse was an epoch. The good woman had contemplated the growing affection of her son and their fair neighbour with exceeding delight. She had anticipated that herself and the young couple, in the event of their union, would reside under the same

roof, either in the cottage where she now dwelt, or in some other that might perhaps afford them a fuller accommodation. She loved Margaret scarcely less than she did her son. She therefore watched with peculiar anxiety the effect which this change would produce upon him. And, though he was most careful to conceal from his mother the disturbance he felt, and though in reality, encouraged by the unequivocal tokens of attachment he received from his mistress, he believed that their separation would be of short continuance, yet she could not but see that he was unusually pensive, and that the interest he took in his ordinary occupations was no longer such as it had been. It was at this time that she was seized with an inflammatory fever. The disease was of a dangerous character. But its symptoms were undoubtedly aggravated by the unsettled state of her thoughts. She became delirious; and in the wanderings of her mind she talked

continually of William and Margaret. She intreated that the young woman might be asked to visit her, might administer her medicines, and support her aching head. When she was silent, her eye still roved in search of something; and she complained that the nurse and the girl who attended her, most unkindly hid from her what she was most desirous to see. William received the letter of Margaret precisely in this situation. He refused to open it. He felt an undefined anticipation of some evil tidings that it would communicate. Superstitiously he deemed it unlucky to open a letter from one he loved, by the side of the bed of a person dangerously ill. He would have judged himself criminal, if he had deliberately sought to withdraw his attention for a moment, from the heart-breaking scene before him, to a consideration of his own desires in any other quarter, his inclination and pleasures.

The good woman died. William felt all the

tenderness and agonies of a son. He had no one to console him. The far-distant abode of the friends, who had so long dwelt at but two fields from his own residence, and whom he so entirely loved, struck him now with tenfold bitterness. The preparations of the funeral went on. He was assisted in them by the wife and two daughters of a neighbouring farmer, who were impressed with the sincerest esteem for William and his mother, but whose "coarse complexions and cheeks of sorry grain" with aptness expressed the texture of their minds.

For two days William was stunned by the unforeseen disaster that had fallen upon him, and totally absorbed in grief. He resorted many times in an hour, to gaze, with feelings that no words can express, upon the body of her who bore him, and who, tenderly as she had ever watched for his advantage and pleasure, could now shew to him no tokens of recognition, could neither hear his voice, nor an-

swer to any of his passionate apostrophes and laments. The only things that diverted him from the depth of his depression, were those cares and attentions, which nature and the customs of society require towards the remains of the friend we have lost.

At length, in the morning of the second day from the death of his mother, the letter he had already received caught his eye, and he no longer refrained from examining its contents. "No doubt," said he, "it comes to tell me that at least I have one friend left: and God knows I am in want of one!" At first, overwhelmed as he was with the calamity the evidences of which were still before his eyes, he could not understand the letter. Its tenor was not such as he had expected. But he had that confidence in Margaret, he considered that they were bound to each other by ties of so ancient a standing, and of so indissoluble a character, and he believed her to be so single-minded and

affectionate, that, "though one rose from the dead to persuade" him, he would not believe that she was capable of inconstancy or change. —At length he satisfied himself of the reality of the paper before him.

It is well, said he. I was once—a very short time ago I was—happy. I had two friends—such friends—they were indeed that which my heart required. How perfect was my delight, when I found myself supplying to my mother the place of the protector she had lost, drying her tears, and reconciling her again to life! There is nothing which makes a being of a pure heart so happy, as to feel his importance to those he loves, and to be able at the close of each succeeding day to say, I have proved myself a "good and faithful" assistant, I have not thought of my own gratifications, but have given myself honestly and unreservedly to the interests and the comfort of one, whom above all the earth I was bound to cherish. And I

had my reward. If with my full heart I gave myself to the service of my mother, there was still an approving angel that stood by, and that counted my good qualities a thousand times beyond their intrinsic merit. These two, the being to whom I devoted my services, and the being who was ever at hand to reward them, are taken from me at once. I am indeed alone. What have I to do with the world? There is no part nor place for me in any of its mansions. I look round me on every side, and find nothing to support me, no one to encourage my efforts, or to lend me a helping hand amidst the complexities and difficulties that every way beset me.

William brooded over his sorrows and his desolate condition incessantly for several following days. He attended the funeral of his parent, and saw her body deposited in the silent grave. As he returned to his forlorn home, he found there waiting for him a young

man of some family and consequence, whom he had repeatedly seen during the season that he had spent under the care and superintendence of his uncle, the clergyman formerly mentioned. This young man, to whom his uncle had at no remote period been a tutor, had many times paid a visit to the person under whose instructions the powers of his mind had been unfolded, and on each occasion had paid considerable attention, and shewn much partiality to William, who was only by four years younger than himself. Young Bouverie, that was his name, was of an open and generous disposition, and had afforded to William the first specimen of a friend, whose studies had been similar, whose sentiments in a striking degree coincided with his own, and who, from the advantages of birth and fortune, might be of some use to him, if such assistance were needed, in pushing him forward in the road to fortune.

Bouverie had learned by accident of the death of William's mother. He well knew with what exemplary duty the young man had determined to consecrate all his efforts to console the widow in her destitute situation, and to superintend the interests of her little concern. Bouverie would have been the last man, to endeavour to divert the stripling from so noble a devotion of his activity and his time. But now, that that obligation was discharged, and obscurity could no longer be a duty, he felt extremely desirous to engage the nephew of his tutor in a closer connection with him. He had himself just obtained a considerable appointment under general Murray, governor of Canada; and he came to propose that William should join him in his expedition. He apologised to the young man for the abruptness of his overture, but added that he was so circumstanced, that there was no time to lose. He should himself be obliged to embark in a few weeks.

Bouverie found his friend in a state of the most pitiable dejection. This was the more remarkable, as William was constitutionally of a very sanguine temperament. The excellence of his disposition led him to regard all the world with kindness; and the nature of the human mind is found to be such, that the world around serves in the effect of a mirror to what passes within us. The philanthropist sees on every side of him the impulses of love, while the malevolent man observes in all his fellow-beings the indications of spite, hostility and ill will. But the events which now befel William were too much for his fortitude to sustain. On returning to his own habitation the frame of his mind had become gloomy and morose. But he no sooner saw Bouverie than he burst into a flood of tears.

His tender-hearted friend at first endeavoured to soothe him by all the common topics of consolation. He told him of the unavail-

ingness of grief, and reminded him that he had still duties to perform. He spoke of the friendly feelings and the interest in his welfare that were felt by his uncle and himself. "You must change the scene," he said.

And wherefore should I change the scene? There is no one that loves me. There is no one for whom I should desire to live. My uncle and you feel compassion for me; and I thank you. But this is not the thing my nature requires, the nourishment of my soul. It is woman only that is truly susceptible, that can fill the cravings of my spirit. I found this consolation and support in my mother. Our interchanges of kindness were of the most tranquillising nature. We were fitted for each other; we understood each other. In the course of nature it is true I must expect that one day my mother would die, and I should survive her. I had hoped indeed that she would live long, and would finally pay the debt of nature, full

of days, and having exhausted the strength that heaven allots to mortals. I must indeed lose her; but I had provided for that. I had a friend, that had sworn to be my comforter, a friend that was young, even as I am young, and who, being in the same period of life, would not have failed to understand my wants and wishes, and to act in unison with me. We had sworn to live together, to feel each other's wishes, to have partaken in each other's joys and sorrows, to have smiled when either smiled, and to have mingled our tears in the moment of disappointment and trial. I have lost my mother and my friend at once. The adored of my heart has abjured all her vows and discarded me. I received her letter of rejection in the room where my mother lay dying; I opened it by the side of her corpse.

The recollections of William, which accompanied these words, were agonising. He felt that he could not refuse what Margaret de-

manded from him. He felt that he could not utterly deny that her decision was just: at least it did high credit to the purity and singleness of her mind. But he was not the less impressed with the conviction that the sun of his existence was for ever set, that the rest of his days was condemned to "disastrous twilight and dim eclipse," and that no hope and no prospect of happiness remained to him. Why should he exert himself? What motive could he have to engage in any new occupation?

By dint however of much kindness, unequivocal sympathy, and the most unwearied patience, Bouverie at length succeeded in convincing him, that the thing which his case most urgently demanded was change of place. He could not recal his mother from the grave. The inexorable law of mortality was equal to all. He did not expect that he could reverse the triumph of filial piety in Margaret. He

had not so studied the laws of religion, he had not so learned the lessons of humanity, as to believe that the effect of the two grievous calamities that had fallen upon him at once, was to be a discharge in full to a young man from all the duties which his being born into society imposed upon him. He was young; he had powers which would not be without their use in the great community; he especially owed to others an example, whether that should operate to a greater or less extent, of patience and resignation. "None of us liveth to himself; and no man dieth to himself."

There is something magical in the operations of sympathy. William could not altogether resist the assiduities of his friend. He had said that he was left alone in the world; but he found that he was not. The arrival of Bouverie was like the descent of an angel to his relief. Bouverie had patience with all his inflexibility and perverseness; the tones of his

voice, the affectionateness of his looks, penetrated to the soul of the disconsolate youth. He was ultimately victorious. William thanked him in the most gratifying tones, the more gratifying because despair had scarcely yet quitted its throne in the heart of the mourner, for all his kindness. Bouverie had indeed convinced him, that he was not utterly alone, that there was one that cared even for so very a wretch as he was. He suffered himself to be led, passively, and without resistance, even as a young child might lead a lamb.

The preparations for the voyage were short. Bouverie directed his own steward to take the affairs of William under his superintendence, and to dispose of his property to the best advantage. Before they departed, William addressed a letter to Margaret, yielding all she demanded, acquainting her with the death of his mother, the interposition of his friend, and the voyage and new scheme of life to which he

had dedicated himself. The letter was couched in terms of the most rigid simplicity. There were no interjections, and none of the innumerable subterfuges of self-pity and reproach. He did not complain of his fate, assure her that he was heart-broken, or attempt to record the struggles and the tortures he felt within. He wrote with the plainness of an Evangelist, setting down facts only, unaccompanied with a comment. But Margaret understood her lover. There was not one feeling, one contention that took place in his bosom, one mastery that he obtained over himself, which her imagination did not pourtray with the utmost minuteness.

The answer of William was substantially such as Margaret had expected. She knew, that he would not have the hardness of heart and the illiberality to wish to bind her in ties which she asked him to dispense her from. He was doubtless aware that no true happiness could grow out of such an union. He was

much too generous of soul to consent to accept from her any thing that was not a voluntary offering. But she did not the less believe that the sacrifice she required of him was such, as would wrench his nature from its strongest holding. And she was shocked beyond the power of words to express, when she found at what a season of distress and agony her ungracious letter had reached him. She had taken for granted, that his mother would be the very person to soothe his griefs, to read to him the lessons of wisdom and virtue, and to supply to him in the most perfect and gratifying manner all that he would have judged himself to have lost in the dissolution of their promised union.

CHAPTER XIII.

MARGARET had made the most uncalculable sacrifice on the altar of filial duty. But, when that sacrifice was complete, her heart recoiled upon itself. She saw the son of lord Borradale; but that sight was not the appropriate medicine for the disease of her mind. She saw him; but the doing so had the effect of contrast: she could not prevent the image of William, the beloved, the exiled, from recurring to her thoughts.

Margaret however was not of a temper to do things by halves. She had chosen her part; and her virtue and her honour required that she should complete what she had begun. The

pang upon William had been inflicted; he was exiled; she had surrendered herself without reserve into the hands of her father; she had been presented to lord Borradale; she had encouraged his son. It was necessary that she should dress her countenance in smiles, that she should personate the exactest courtesy, that she should carefully close up every avenue through which the agony of her mind might discover itself. She had decided that this was the part that justice and duty imposed on her. It was necessary to be firm. The power that an energetic and elevated mind exercises over itself is of vast extent. She commanded her features; and they obeyed. She regulated her gestures; and they conformed themselves to her will. She called up certain tones and inflexions of the voice; and the organs of speech became accommodated to the authority of the master-mind. She resolved to banish from her thoughts so much as the recollection of her

late-favoured lover; and to a great degree she succeeded in this. The recollection sometimes did not recur to her for hours together. She sang; she danced. She recited in her mind the duties of an ingenuous female to an accepted lover; she accustomed herself to the recapitulation of whatever would justly be required and looked for in the conduct of an exemplary wife. All this she did, that she might not prove herself inferior in resignation to what has been told of the daughter of the general of the Jews. She looked at her father, and was satisfied. He would succeed to the full extent of his wishes. He would live in the midst of magnificence and splendour. He would contemplate with all the pride which was congenial to his nature his noble son-in-law and his right honourable daughter. Whatever became of herself, she would have the satisfaction of performing without a blemish all that could be demanded of her towards the

author of her existence. Nay, she did not despair of herself. If the punctual discharge of the first of all duties could make her happy, had she not a right to look for happiness? She had often heard that the soul's true sunshine was derived from an approving conscience; and she believed it.

Nothing could be more admirable than the intentions of Margaret; nothing more strenuous than her efforts. Many persons in her place probably would have succeeded; but she failed. The attempt was too mighty for her. The feebleness of her nature sank under the giganticness of the undertaking. The whole of her days was passed in unremitted exertion; never did she suffer her attention or her resolution to subside for an instant. But the night came. As long as she was in society, it was well. But the very winding up of the strings to a too great degree of tenseness, conduced to destroy the instrument. Perhaps she played

her part in too exemplary a style. When she was alone, when she was no longer called upon to exert herself, the very springs of life within her appeared to give way. She was scarcely able to support herself. Tears, of which she was unaware till she felt the moisture on her face, rolled down her cheeks in an abundant stream. She sighed, as if her heart would break. She sobbed; she became hysterical. And this in its beginning, not from any thoughts that rushed over her mind, but merely because she had continued to tax herself too rigorously.

Thus the reaction began, probably from the mere animal relaxation of the fibres. But this was but the beginning of evils. Her nights were almost altogether without sleep. Her limbs were restless, and she tossed from side to side, even, if I might borrow a simile from Homer, as a steak cut from an ox agitates itself on the burning embers. And, when she slept,

or, more properly speaking, for a few moments forgot her individuality and the material substances that encompassed her, her dreams were even more distressful and unrefreshing than the wild and incoherent thoughts that beset her when she was neither wholly awake nor asleep. In dreams the reins of the soul are no longer under the guidance of reflection or reason. The power, whatever it is, that presides over that state of existence, hurries us wherever it will. The rudder of the mind is powerless; our sense of morality is reduced to almost nothing. We witness crimes, and we commit them, undogged by that moral sense, of which the disciplined spirit can at no time divest itself, while the sun is in the heavens, or the sun of truth penetrates the inner man with its beams. She saw her lover sometimes in a mood of bitter upbraidings, and at other times the wasted, wan and colourless shadow of desolation and despair. She saw her favoured

suitor assault him, now that the gallant youth seemed deprived by melancholy and sorrow of his wonted energies of defence, and pierce his manly limbs with a thousand wounds, and scatter his remains to all the winds of heaven. In this situation her imaged William would utter the most piercing screams, and implore her to interfere to save him, while lord Borradale and her father held her back with inexorable effort from making the smallest advance to his rescue. The recollection of his voyage to Canada would then occur to her; she saw him standing in the gallery of the ship; a sudden tempest would assault the vessel; he was washed overboard; he was devoured by a shark; and in the countenance of the shark she all at once discovered the lineaments of her destined husband. Repeatedly did she start out of her sleep with the terror of what she had appeared to behold; and it was often a very long time before she could thoroughly

convince herself, that what had so exceedingly terrified her was unbased in reality.

It was thus that the bodily strength of the self-devoted victim gave way, unable to keep pace with the energies of her mind. A female of a different character would probably have been more successful in going through with the part she had determined to sustain. The virtue of Margaret destroyed her. There was too much tenacity and consistence in the frame of her soul. Another female, having resolved to dismiss her earliest attachment, would have fixed her thoughts on the splendours of rank, and have felt her mind led away from its original simplicity, even as her father had been led away. But these splendours had no charm of power to divert the temper of Margaret from its first bias. Other females would have called to their aid the volatility that is so often found characteristic of their sex. They are like butterflies that wander from flower to flower

through the whole inclosure of an earthly paradise; and this levity sufficiently secures them against the chance of falling victims to any single disappointment. But Margaret's mind was of a different constitution: where it fixed, there it rested. There was in it no infusion of perverseness. She desired the happiness of all; and especially of those to whom she was bound by the most familiar and the oldest ties. Selfishness seemed not to enter in the smallest degree into her character; she appeared to regard it as the proper business of her life, to study the happiness of others. But her disposition was firm and unvarying. She was in the most striking degree gentle. She was tranquil of spirit, and clear of soul. Her mind had the smoothness of a lake, the surface of which was unvexed by so much as a single breath, and at the same time the steadiness of an edifice the materials of which were of marble.

But, however unalterable was the substance of her mind, and however delicate the mould in which it was cast, she had not the smallest inclination to depart from the scheme of conduct she had elected. She gave no quarter to that species of impulse, which in so many cases whispers to the timid spirit, You have done enough; you have shewn how willing you were to conquer your weakness; human nature cannot bear more than you have borne, or resist more than you have resisted; it is fit that you should now give way; your efforts to obey, well entitle you to call on your elders at length to cease from their requisition, and to acknowledge that what they require is unfit to be executed.

Margaret on the contrary was fully resolved not to play booty, nor stop half-way in the course of duty she prescribed to herself. The union therefore between the elder and the younger branch of the house of Borradale, day

after day drew nearer to its consummation. The preparations were advancing; the wedding garments purchased; the jewels and other presents which the intended bride is accustomed to receive on such occasions, were in complete readiness. The day was named for the ceremony; four days were suffered to elapse between the period when it was fixed on, and that on which it was to arrive.

The father of the lovely victim had the whole powers of his soul fastened on one point. The very energies with which he desired to see it accomplished, made him regard all delay, all uncertainty, with an impatience almost amounting to frenzy. He could not but see that his daughter, who, as long as they dwelt on the banks of the Severn, had been the very personification of the Goddess of Health, was incessantly growing more and more thin and delicate in her appearance. The roses in her cheek were completely faded; the lustre, the laughing

serenity, that lately flashed from her eyes, was no more. If colour was at any time to be found in her complexion, it was unwholesome and hectic; if fire was in her eyes, it was the indication of disease. Her father would occasionally question her respecting her health with a certain alarm. But so surely as the question was proposed, Margaret would rouse herself. She called up a languid smile to grace the beauty of her lips; she composed her voice to an even and a cheerful key. She assured her father that she was perfectly well. The old man, fixed to his purpose, and willing to deceive himself, was easily satisfied. He kissed her parched and burning lips, and almost believed that what he found there was the genial glow of health; he felt the cold, clamminess of her palm, and thought the skin was elastic and dry. He said to himself, She must know the state of her health better than I do; and she assures me she is well.

Thursday was the day appointed for the wedding. As it drew nearer and more near, Margaret felt an insupportable load on her spirits, weighing her down to earth. With all the power of her will she resolutely sent the vital principle through every joint and articulation in her frame. She roused herself. She said to her own soul, It is little now that remains to be done. The bitterness of death is past. Two days more, and all will be over. And I have no doubt, that when that shall be the case, I shall feel relieved. "Things without all remedy, will be without regard." I shall no longer then have these strange shrinkings and contractions of the soul. I shall have discharged a great duty; and the sense of this will bring with it congratulation. The recollection of my childish partialities will then become a crime. I shall no longer dare so much as to dream of William.

But with the best intentions in the world,

and with all the resolution of which her nature was capable, she grew worse from hour to hour. Her mother, as has already been mentioned, was a weak woman, and accustomed to yield without resistance to the will of her husband. But she had the affections of a mother. She had at all times regarded the decisions of her husband as so many oracles. He was a person of rank; she was by birth a peasant's daughter. He had forfeited the favour of his family by marrying her; and the least she could do in return, was to take care, so far as depended on her, that he should not have further reason to repent his rashness.

But the mother of Margaret, with all possible submission to the will of her husband, could not in every case see things in the same light in which he saw them. Her mind was formed on a different principle. Her actions were regulated by another code. She had not the smallest tincture of ambition in her com-

position. She was therefore much more clear-sighted as to the external face of things, and the deterioration of her daughter's health than he was. Margaret never complained. She was infinitely above the pitiful art, the low trick, of endeavouring to make her mother a party against the will of her father, to which she herself professed to submit. Such as she was to one of her parents, she was to the other. She never thought of sacrificing herself by halves. She would not for the world have introduced discord under her parental roof. Her whole soul was simplicity. Her whole conduct was of a piece. She never told her regrets; she never whispered them to the vacant air; her scheme was entire self-conquest, without reserving one corner in her heart for weakness or folly.

CHAPTER XIV.

Early on the morning of the second day before the marriage, the mother came to the bedside of her daughter. She had previously been much alarmed. She stooped over her pillow, that she might make her own observations, and draw a surer prognostic and a more impartial report from the evidence of inspection, than she would have a chance of deriving from the answers of the patient sufferer. Margaret was still asleep. She had passed a feverish and restless night, till at length nature was worn out, and the young woman had fallen into a short oblivion. Though asleep, her eyes were not closed. There was an uneasy twitch-

ing of the muscles of several parts of the body. Her lips moved, and uttered several indistinct sounds, though the mother could not make out the meaning. She gently recalled her to the perception of things around her.

She first asked how she had passed the night, and received from Margaret the same answer she would have returned to her father; an answer, the purpose of which was to suffer things to go on in the train in which they had lately proceeded.

The soul of the good woman was stirred within her by the position in which they stood. She was like one inspired. Her features enlarged. Her attitude was marked with a striking solemnity.

My child, said she, you never knew me any thing but passive: and that which a human creature has been for a series of years, is seldom likely to be altered. Your father took me, and made me the thing he would; he has at all

times found me an obedient wife. But you, my only child, are about to leave me, to be placed under another jurisdiction, and to dwell under a stranger roof. I know that this is the law of our existence in society, and I could have submitted. I could have borne it, if the change had promised to be a happy one for you. But, oh, Margaret !—

Think you, because I have been a silent, that I have been an inattentive, observer of you and your goings on ? You look to my eye, like a victim that is to be sacrificed, like an innocent creature, who had fallen under the gripe of the law, and who, having been pronounced guilty, has the days of his short remaining existence numbered on the calendar. If I saw the matter otherwise, my feeling would have been different. If I thought only of a marriage the scheme of which had been selected by your father, I would have stood by and said nothing. He has made his choice;

and this is according to the practice of those who live with us, and those that lived before us. You have subscribed to his choice; and I should have subscribed too. I should have been contented that you formed other and nearer ties than those which have hitherto subsisted between you and me; and, impressed with the thought of the comparative narrowness of my understanding, I should not have conceived myself entitled to look minutely into the affair, and to have weighed its merits in my private scale.

But I do not view the matter in that light. Not having the prejudices your father has, not being swallowed up, as he is, in the vision of something that he prizes beyond the power of words to describe, I suppose I see more clearly the things that are before me. I see the dimness of your eye; I see the deadly paleness of your cheek. I have attentively remarked the cold damp that bedews your forehead, and the

unhealthy pink that from time to time marks your countenance. You will not live, my Margaret! Your heart is broken, my Margaret! I could follow you to the altar; but I cannot follow you thither, when at a short distance beyond I see the tomb.

Tell me, my child, if this is not so! Do not refuse your confidence to me, your mother! If you can assure me that you shall be happy, that peace will dwell within your bosom, that you accept with your whole soul the husband that your father has chosen for you, that health will attend the scene of your married life, and that you feel yourself capable of cheerfully discharging its duties, it is enough; I shall be satisfied; I will believe a child, that never from the hour that she was capable of distinguishing good from evil, told her mother an untruth.

Margaret was overwhelmed by the solemn appeal made to her by her mother. She adjured

her to stop. She said, You should not have done this, mother! But the good woman, as has already been said, was elevated above herself. She had worked herself up to meet the occasion, and would not be interrupted. She was wholly unlike what she had been found at any other season. She, who had all her life been passive and neutral, was at once swelled into independence. It was for a life, the life of the creature that she loved most deeply on the face of the earth.

As the appeal proceeded, Margaret was drowned in a flood of tears. She sobbed; her bosom heaved; it seemed almost as if her heart would burst the boundary that inclosed it.

The mother finished. She ended with the adjuration that Margaret would pour her whole heart into the bosom of her that bore her. Silence ensued; a silence that was unbroken on either part for some minutes. The mother would have followed with caresses the words

she had uttered. But there was something in Margaret's manner that forbade it; a solemnity as of one preparing for the consummation of what she meditated. Yet Margaret was the gentlest creature that lived. There was strangely mixed with the loftiness of her resignation, an imploring gesture, that asked for forbearance and pity, the most childlike that it is possible to imagine.

She composed her features into an expression of exemplary resignation. It was nevertheless sufficiently perceptible to an observing eye that she was playing a part.

From my heart, mother, I thank you. Yes, I always knew your love, and knew, however, like the lamp of Vesta, it burned for ever, that it would display its greatest power on the greatest occasion. I ought to have expected from you what I have now witnessed. But it is to no purpose. I have chosen my part. Here is my hand (said she, stretching it from

the bed): see, if I am not firm. Put your fingers upon my pulse: you will find that it beats with entire steadiness and regularity. This is the greatest trial to which I can ever be called. Permit me to rise. I will but put on my morning dress. I will go to my father.

The mother carefully watched all her motions. The mind of Margaret was fixed; but her frame was unequal to the exertion. She trembled, and was compelled instantly to seat herself.

Never mind! never mind, dear mother! I shall go through with it yet. I will not hurry myself. I was to blame to be in a hurry. Let the girl come to me. Let me have some breakfast. I have not been well. I have had some bad dreams. I will go about it, as fits the duty of a daughter. I will go through it, and my father shall be satisfied. Never fear me, mother: you shall find that you had no need.

The good woman shook her head with a mournful air. But she did, as she was desired. She left the room; and the girl presently made her appearance.

The mother instantly proceeded from the apartment of Margaret to the garden, where she found her husband, as she expected. He was sitting on a bench.

Well, my love, said he, have you seen our daughter this morning? How is she? I expect her spark and my lord to be with me within the hour.

I have seen Margaret. She is very ill. She wanted to come to you; but she could not. She has been obliged to remain where she was.

Yes, yes, I know she has been unwell. She is a simple girl, and likes the banks of the Severn, where she was born and bred, better than she does the North. But she is a dutiful child; and she will find her virtue and her duty crowned with an ample reward.

Indeed, my love, she will not. Her lot is cast. Her reward and her crown will be in heaven, and not here.

Maurice, I have hardly ever had the courage to speak to you, to contradict you. We have lived upon these terms now for almost twenty years; and I thought to have gone on so to the end. I do not matter for myself. I do not live for myself, but for you. It has been my purpose, that every attention I could give, should be for your accommodation. I have but one other tie to the world.

Forgive me, if I love Margaret nearly as well as I love you. We have but this one. I know that you are a slave to the pride of birth, and the trappings of nobility. The longer you have been condemned to be without them, you love them the more. Old man, old man, what will you do without your daughter? You have been accustomed to see her every day: when

you do not see her, you think of her. What will you do with your nobility, if you have none to inherit it after you? Will you give your daughter in exchange for it? You may indeed place a coronet on her coffin. You may bury her in the sepulchre of the Borradales. Will that be a sufficient equivalent, and satisfy you for cutting off the thread of her life?

The old man was greatly startled with this address. The view of things that was thus forced upon his attention, was new to him. He was not without his superstition. He was a believer, if I may so far force the word from its ordinary acceptation, in second sight. He believed that mortals, upon extraordinary occasions, have a secret sympathy with the invisible and the future. He had never seen his wife in the least like what he now saw her. She was as one inspired. Her organs seemed as if they were usurped and taken possession

of by a power above herself, as if her unconscious tongue was made a vehicle to declare the secrets of the world unknown.

He made little answer, and requested to be left alone. He said, I expect lord Borradale and his son anon. The mother had the discernment to see, that the salutary wound she purposed to inflict, had taken effect. She believed it was better to leave the thing as it was, than to irritate her husband by further contradiction.

Lord Borradale and his son arrived, as they were expected to do. They found the old man unusually thoughtful and sad. They had uttered little more than the customary compliments and enquiries, when Margaret joined them. She was leaning on the arm of her mother. The young man, who had been bred in the knowledge of all the courtesies of life, flew towards her, and with a gallant air took her by the hand.

Lord Borradale had been absent several

weeks. He fixed his eye on the intended bride. He had chosen her originally as he would have chosen a statue from the hands of Phidias or Lysippus to place in his gallery. His choice had been founded first upon a miniature that had accidentally fallen in his way, and then upon a portrait of the size of life. He had subsequently visited her in person. She had passed victoriously through these successive examinations.

Lord Borradale was, in his quality of a virtuoso, *elegans spectator formarum*, "a discerning observer of the pretensions of the human figure and countenance." Margaret now stood before him with all her original graces of person, and all that exquisite beauty of feature, by which he had been struck from the first. But there was much that he could no longer perceive. Where was the celestial rosy red in her cheek, that so beautifully contrasted with the alabaster fairness of her forehead? Where was that

glow of health, and that enchanting smile of content, which had once formed the crown of her appearance? Where was the shew of firm, plump, elastic substance, which had taught the spectator to believe that paradise was to be found in her embraces?

She would still have served perhaps to the statuary, as a model for a Niobe mourning for her desolate and childless condition, or rather for an Iphigenia in Aulis, as she was delivered over by her father to the priest, that she might be sacrificed on the altar of Diana. She seemed as if the thread of her life were already cut, as if she had already received the mortal wound, the trace of which was indeed unseen, but which had full surely marked her for the grave.

This was not the thing that lord Borradale had contemplated. He wanted, as I have said, a beautiful and graceful bride, to preside at his table, and do the honours to his visitors. He wanted an object for envy, not for pity. He

wanted a health-breathing and fruitful mother to his posterity, that, of the nobility of Borradale, *Genus immortale maneret, multosque per annos Staret fortuna domus, et avi numerarentur avorum*[a].

He started at the sight of her. He said, My dear, you seem very ill. He turned to the father, exclaiming, Here is something wrong. Have you called in proper advice? I must by all means request that the marriage may be deferred. Thursday must no longer stand, as we had purposed.

The eyes of the father were opened. He had been previously struck with the expostulation of the mother. She had appeared to him like a prophetess, delivering the oracles of heaven. The warning she had pronounced to him, was impressively inforced by the scene

[a] "The race might be immortal, the fortune of the house perpetuated for myriads of years, and the succession continued through countless generations."

before him, the meek submission of his daughter, trembling and deadly pale, and the effect that had obviously been produced upon lord Borradale.

No, my lord, exclaimed he, neither Thursday, nor any future time. Pardon me; I have been dazzled with your lordship's noble and generous propositions. My daughter had a lover, her equal as our circumstances then stood, who once saved her life, and between whom and herself there subsisted a thousand endearments. But she so generously consented to sacrifice herself to my foolish and contemptible ambition, that I was deceived. I thought that, where there was a heroical resolution, every thing else would follow. I accepted her surrender. I admired her filial resignation, and believed that with so much virtue, she could not fail to be happy. I have played the tyrant. My bowels yearned for her: but I have said every day, "A little more perseverance, and all will

be right. I have gone far; I have extorted her consent; I have been the means of banishing the lord of her affections to the other side of the globe; it would be foolish to give in now."

But no; I will not be the death of my Margaret. She is of ten thousand times greater value than I am. She is worth all the world. What shall I ever hereafter think of myself, if I were to be the means of the miscarriage of so glorious a creature? The unmurmuring sacrifice that she has consented to make of her most bosom preference and her dearest affections, gives her an omnipotent title to my tenderness and indulgence. Shall I take this willing victim, and lead her like a lamb to the slaughter?

No; Margaret, beloved of my soul, call back your health, call back the roses to your cheeks, nd serenity to your soul! Never more shall you be thwarted by me. I will not break your heart. Heal, I intreat you, carefully heal the

wounds that my obduracy has inflicted on you!

My lord, I intreat you to allow me to resign into your hands this pleasant retreat, sheltered as it is under the wing of your magnificent mansion. I desire nothing better, than to return to the little shepherd's hut, that for so many years formed my retreat on the banks of the Severn. I bid farewel to the illusions and enticements of ambition. Margaret, my beloved Margaret, henceforth I will love nothing but you. I have been in danger of losing you, and I shut my eyes on the danger. Cheer up, my child! No longer "with your vailed lids seek for your chosen lover in the dust!" Henceforth I will be your indentured servant, having no will but yours, seeking for nothing so much as your gratification and content.

We will immediately send to William from the other side of the globe. Be assured, he will come, and that suddenly. He loves no-

thing but you. He knows no happiness, but in your endearments and your smiles. Henceforth the sun of no day shall shine but upon the advancement and completion of your wishes.

Margaret heard the words of her father with uncontroled amazement and transport. She leaned upon her mother; she tottered to a seat; the mother drew a chair near her; the poor girl hid her face in her mother's neck; she wept abundantly; her frame was convulsed with her sobs; she was unable to utter a word.

The whole scene was to her a scene of enchantment and miracle. The dutiful girl had prepared herself to do whatever her father required. She had bid all the aspirations of her soul be still; she had determined to be nothing, if not dutiful. If she had sunk, and must ultimately have expired under the greatness of the trial, it would at least not have been for want of the firmest resolution, and the sharpest and most unflinching struggles. And now,

that all this should suddenly be terminated by her father's giving up his cherished projects, coming over to favour and encourage the dearest secret of her thoughts, and telling her that nothing would make him so happy as her union with the object of her earliest affections, this was more than her most ardent hopes could have aspired to, and went beyond the bounds of her wildest credulity.

Lord Borradale was struck with the scene before him. He was of a cold and unimpassioned nature; but the coldest natures are sometimes liable to be excited upon extraordinary occasions; and then it not seldom happens, that the flame, so difficult to light, catches with a pertinacity, and burns with a steadiness, though not a fervour, that might do honour to a nobler class of characters. He was edified and impressed, as who would not have been? with the dutiful self-abandonment of this noble creature. He resolved not to be outdone in

generosity. He told the father of the girl, that he forgave him all his engagements, and approved of his present decision. He added, that he could not express his admiration of the gallantry of Margaret's conduct, and was determined, as far as he could contrive it, that they should not be losers by the present alteration. He approved of the proposition of their returning back to their residence in Somersetshire, and engaged to settle an income of two hundred a year on the father, and to give the daughter a thousand pounds as a marriage portion.

The young gentleman conducted himself with the most edifying philosophy on this critical occasion. He had been ready to marry his cousin, because his father recommended it. He believed her to be as good, or nearly so, as a Grecian statue. But he did not doubt, though he was so acutely disappointed in the present instance, that his merits would procure him a

suitable establishment and a beautiful bride, who might hereafter be presented with himself at court to the admiration of a crowded and a brilliant drawing-room.

CHAPTER XV.

The sudden change which took place in the feelings and prospects of Margaret was of the most memorable nature. It was like a reprieve to the unfortunate wretch who has already mounted the scaffold. It was like the unexpected announcement of favourable symptoms to the sick man who has received his last absolution, and passed through the sacrament of the extreme unction. This person has in supposition entered the mournful portal through which all mortals must pass; he has shaken hands with hope; he is satisfied that help is vain; he has dismissed the illusions of the world; the grave has opened its jaws to receive

him. The muscles of his countenance are fallen; upon his eye-balls rest the sadness of a compelled resignation. If then unexpected tidings of gladness reach his ear, what music is there in the sound! It has the long-drawn, delicious melody of the Lydian lyre. He believes that he shall once again behold the blue heavens and the green earth, breathe the breath of health, and scent the fragrance of the morning air. He apprehended that he had done with all things sublunary, and persuaded himself that they had no longer any beauty to his spirit. But how is every thing changed in a moment! A new life has descended upon him. It is the birth not of an unconscious infant, but the regeneration of a matured humanity, of a creature who knows, and knows the more perfectly because he believed the whole at an end, the joys of sensation, of thought, of reflection, of a conscious being, admitted to mix once

more in the activity, and hopes, and busy scene of things below.

Margaret and her parents were not long in removing from their new habitation, and returning to the scene of her former joys. As they entered the neighbourhood, and caught sight of the village spire, how did her heart leap within her! She could no longer contain herself. She begged to be allowed to leave the carriage, and walk the remainder of the distance. She was in no hurry. She was rather desirous to savour the sweets of this her genuine home at her leisure. Her mind would then change. Alternately she leaped like a young roe on the mountains, or advanced with such slow and measured steps, as if she wished that the tell-tale air might not syllable the report of what she did. Her father supported her, and led her on. He opened the little wicket that admitted them to the garden. A

servant already appeared at the door, and invited them to enter. Margaret fell down on the earth, and kissed the threshold, and bathed it with her tears. Never, never again had she hoped to enjoy this unspeakable happiness. It was a full and a rich reward for all that she had lately suffered.

And now came the question of the return of William, and the meeting, the image of which she dwelt on for ever. She did not doubt that he would come back on the wings of sympathy, the first moment it would be practicable to do so, after having received her father's letter.

She allowed her father to be the communicator of good tidings. She believed that that was the best form in which they could be conveyed. The old man wrote in the frankness of his new-found liberty, intreating to be forgiven for his injustice, describing the fidelity of Margaret, stating in explicit terms how her invincible affections, invincible even to her own

most strenuous efforts, had conquered his worldly-mindedness, inviting William to return with the least possible delay, and assuring him that the life of his beloved hung suspended upon the promptness of his compliance. To this epistle Margaret subjoined a postscript, written with the simplicity which so eminently distinguished her, and couched in terms of the most fervent and unbounded regard.

William had been already some months in Canada, before this letter came to his hands. The struggle of Margaret had been of considerable duration; she had placed herself entirely at the disposal of her father; it was by slow degrees that the work of destruction manifested itself in her frame; and it was nothing less than the full conviction of every bystander that her life would be the sacrifice, which brought about so memorable and unlooked-for a revolution.

William welcomed the letter with unimagin-

able transport. It was in desperation only that he had yielded to the remonstrances of Bouverie, and consented to live. He had never for one moment lifted his head in cheerfulness. He had moved about on the deck of the vessel, and in the colony after he arrived, rather like a meagre, gliding, unlaid ghost, than a living member of the community of man. He had no spirit in him. He was like a man that had almost forgot to speak, or at least who spoke with reluctance, and to whom the most ordinary communications of human society were attended with effort and pain. There was no sullenness; the original gentleness of his frame of mind remained undiminished; but the main spring that maintained the operations of the machine was worn out, and seemed as if it were every moment in danger to perish altogether. He wept, as though he wept not; he used whatever presented itself to his hands, as one possessing nothing; he walked, as a man that

walks in his sleep, whose eyes are open, but the sense that should accompany them is shut. "Even such a man, so dull, so dead in look, so woe-begone," was William, who not many months before had been the life of every circle, the envy of all his companions, the happiest of the happy.

When he received the letter of the father of his beloved, he could not believe his eyes. He recognised the handwriting in a moment: every thing that had relation to Margaret made an impression upon him never to be obliterated. He said, For what purpose is this letter addressed to me? There is nothing left to be demanded of me. I have surrendered every thing. I have abandoned the casket where every thing that was dear to me was enshrined. I have evacuated the fortress which could alone have preserved me from every ill.—Yet, whatever the letter might contain, it was welcome to him. It must bring him news of his Mar-

garet, of one for ever lost, but who could not fail to be dear to him as the light of his eyes, and must always be remembered by him, as that being who alone of all mortal existences had made his heart beat with the deepest interest, and the most perfect rapture.

William read the letter three times, before he could properly be said to comprehend one word of its meaning. It was a light from heaven that shone all round him, and extinguished in him for a time the faculty of seeing. It could not be true. The words must have a meaning different from that which was obvious and direct. It was like as if the letter had been written in an alphabet that was familiar to him, at the same time that it presented words he had never seen before, or had never seen in such a combination. That the father of Margaret should have written to invite his return, and to sue to him to accept the hand of

his daughter, that father, who had proved himself the veriest slave of glitter and ostentation, who was in his mind a most merciless tyrant, who had not hesitated to break the most perfect of all ties, a harmony and consent of souls which nothing could parallel. It was impossible!

He believed, and disbelieved. But the most agreeable state of mind gradually became the predominant. He trod in air. He could not well tell where he was, or in what part of the world. For a short interval, every door that opened he expected would set Margaret before him, every new direction of the garden-walk he pursued, every carriage that advanced from the other end of the street. He flew to Bouverie, and put the letter in his hands. It was well for him that he did so. The sympathetic looks of his friend, the kind tones of his voice, modulated by feelings of earnest affection, brought William back from the incoherent and

the unreal, and excited in him the ideas of time and place, of plans to be considered, and schemes to be digested.

Bouverie at once perceived that it was unavoidable but that he must concur with William, and assist him to return with all practicable speed to his native country. No prospect of improving his fortune could enter into competition with the imperious necessity he felt to throw himself at the feet of his beloved, and yield to the master-passion that ate up all the springs of his being. Even if hereafter he should conform to the suggestions of prudence, and determine to take advantage of the patronage he might reasonably hope for in the colony, yet the marriage that was proposed to him must at all events be his first step, and then he might, if it appeared eligible, recross the Atlantic with his bride, and make one of the speculators, who, in this province newly acquired to Great Britain, saw a thousand advantages leading on to

prosperity, and were enchanted with the idea of the amusements of a Canadian winter, and the rich exuberance which distinguished its summer.

Some small delay was still necessary. Bouverie, and the young men of the colony who could yet discern in William the gallant youth he had been, and anticipate in fancy the period when he would break through the cloud which had hitherto overwhelmed him, would not permit him to leave them like one who fled. A vessel was about to quit the harbour for England on the third day from that on which he received the welcome epistle; and by that vessel he dispatched an answer, announcing that he should revisit the shores of Britain in one month from the period when that letter should reach the hands of those to whom it was directed. It happened that he was able to name the vessel, the Roebuck, merchantman, of Plymouth, in which he should take his passage; and, as a

passenger with his family would be landed at that port, while the ship with its freight proceeded to London, William would take advantage of the opportunity to quit the vessel, and proceed by land to the place where his mother had lately lived, and where his beloved had newly taken up her residence.

From the time that Margaret's father dispatched his letter to Canada, the love-sick girl had on the whole enjoyed a sweet serenity. She anticipated the most enviable happiness. She had but to count a few short months, and her William would join her again, never more to be separated. She felt assured of his truth. She felt assured of his forgiveness. What an incredible reverse of fortune had thus befallen her! The future she had lately looked forward to, consisted in her being destined to what was construed as the most intimate union within the pale of our social institutions, with a youth who could excite in her neither respect nor

attachment, and who was himself incapable of these emotions. She could rely upon herself for the most exemplary conduct. She did not believe that the young man would use her ill; and she expected to pass her married life in a calm, like that she had read of in the Dead Sea. She did not expect to die; she resolved punctiliously to discharge all her duties. She determined in no way to desert the station in which the order of events seemed to place her. She believed that, when every uncertainty was at an end, she should recover her health and strength, and go on to the end in the dull, hopeless, vegetative life, in the journey over the wild, desolate, sandy, unproductive desert, that lay before her. She would, in recompense for this immeasurable sacrifice, have the satisfaction to reflect that she had done all this in unreserved obedience to the author of her being. But then she felt with agony that she was not sacrificing herself alone. She believed, that

the person round whom her affections were inextricably twined, would be no more happy than she was, that he, like herself, would be consigned to perpetual blast. And, in proportion to the degree in which she admired and adored him, was her anguish in anticipating the gradual sinking and destruction of the noblest creature the earth had to boast. It was these thoughts that had so lately brought her down to the brink of the grave.

But now that every prohibition to their union was removed, Margaret indeed possessed her soul in peace. She, who had shewn what command she could exercise over herself in the greatest of possible trials, without difficulty subdued her spirit, and regarded as nothing the interval that was placed between her and the consummation of her hopes. The mountains were removed, the vallies were exalted, and the rough places made plain. All seemed smooth before her. She thanked her father

every morning, who appeared to her the author of her present felicity. In the sweetest accents she lamented over the disappointment of his prospects, and chid herself that any infirmity of hers should have occasioned that disappointment. Why did he give way to her weakness? It would have been her greatest glory to be the sacrifice to the accomplishment of the thing he aimed at. At the same time she thanked him in most heart-felt tones for her William. In thus generously surrendering the edifice of ideal greatness he had built for himself, she considered him as the author of all her happiness. He was a second time, and in a question above all others most interesting to her, her father. He gave her life, not in blindness and ignorance, but because he loved her with distinguishing preference. Every day of that blessed life she was assured she should pass with her William, she should recollect the relentings and condescension of her father, and

consider herself as indebted for all to his unparalleled kindness.

In this harmonious frame of spirit it is no wonder that the health of Margaret perpetually improved. The unfavourable symptoms which so alarmingly threatened her life, one by one disappeared, and left no vestige behind. Her cheeks became smooth, and resumed the rosy hue that was the unavoidable result of functions restored. Her eyes became once more bright and lustrous, and the smile of cordiality and enjoyment sat on her lips. The muscles of her frame grew plumper and more elastic. She wandered in the paths that William loved; she revisited with conscious recollections the scene, where the declaration of his love had first broke through the control of diffidence and the fear of offence, and burst in a stream of eloquence from his trembling lips. She did not forget the field in which she had been hunted by the infuriated cattle, or the tremen-

dous precipice down which she had fallen, and where William had so miraculously saved her life.

Meanwhile she did not fail to calculate the days and the hours that must elapse, before she could hope to see him again. First came the dispatch of her father's letter of recal. Weeks must elapse between the time when she printed on the address her farewel kiss, and winged its speed with her prayers, and the time when he would receive it. Then she saw her William in fancy when the letter was delivered to him, and pictured to herself his emotions. Yes, she did not doubt that he would hail it with joy unspeakable, and regard its contents as bringing to him a restoration from death to life. But how many things might happen to protract his return! Going out, as he did, under the patronage of a person of greater opulence and worldly importance than himself, he could not be altogether his

own master. She revolved the various struggles that might occur between the impetuosity of passion, and the demands of the situation in which her father's letter might find him. William was the truest lover, the most pure and single-hearted youth that ever existed: but he had also the most exquisite moral feelings, and would leave no relative duty unpaid.

CHAPTER XVI.

At length his answer arrived, in which he promised that, in one month from its receipt, he would make his appearance before her in person. He named the ship in which he was to come, and the port, Plymouth, where he was to land. Oh, how she doated on this letter! She had preserved many preceding billets that she had received from him. But she had locked them in a cabinet, and placed them in a remote corner, where she would be least likely to fall upon them by accident. She scorned the idea of preserving them as fuel for her ill-fated and discarded passion. What she did, she resolved in the integrity of her heart, and

in the most entire good-faith, to accomplish. But she could not prevail upon herself to consign them to the devouring element. She could not consent to the violent and profane destruction of what was his, and might still be considered as representing him. It was enough, she thought, if she never opened the casket that contained these letters, never pampered her sight with a line that composed them, never voluntarily even looked upon the case in which they were enshrined.

But how little, a short time ago, had she expected to add another letter to the heap! When she removed from the North to the banks of the Severn, she took care that this cabinet should accompany her; and she no longer imposed on herself the severe restraint that it should never be opened. On the contrary she regarded it as a day of jubilee, when, fearlessly and without remorse, she threw back the lid; and, every day since, she had made it

one of her foremost indulgences, to gaze on the lines which William had traced, to admire the beautiful phraseology and the words of fire in which he recorded his love, and to trace every variation and gentle transition from sentiment to sentiment, which his clear and transparent language conveyed. But his last letter was dearer than the rest. It assured her of the continuance of his affection, which no rejection, no change of climate, and no new connections and prospects could destroy or diminish.

As the time appointed for his arrival drew near, a certain restlessness and impatience became visible in the deportment of Margaret. Her hopes were sanguine; she did not doubt she should once again embrace the lover whom her father generously restored to her. But she recollected every thing she had heard of the treacherous element to whose mercy he was now committed, the rocks, the shelves and

the quicksands, that often lurked beneath its smiling surface, and lured many a tall bark to its ruin. She thought of the violence of the raging winds, and of the broad, turmoiling waves, that rose "Olympus high, and ducked again as low, as hell is from heaven." She pictured to herself the broad Atlantic, from the midst of which the keenest eye from the tallest mast could discern no shore, and then the approach of shore, which was often fraught with more danger than could arise from the most gigantic billows in the widest ocean.

Her father at length took pity upon her exceeding uneasiness, and kindly proposed that they should remove to Plymouth about the time of the Roebuck's expected arrival, and surprise the way-worn traveller with the pleasure of an early encounter. They hired a lodging within view of the sea; and Margaret several times in the day paced the sands, and looked out with an anxious eye and a beating

heart, whenever a white sail appeared in the distance. Sometimes she climbed to the top of Mount Edgecumbe, that she might give to her prospect a more extensive range.

The state of the weather changed a few days after the removal of the family of Margaret to the coast of the English Channel. The summer had been genial and serene; and every thing appeared prosperous for the navigation of William. But, as the days shortened, the winds grew loud and hollow and blusterous. This state of things continued, and even increased day after day. The oldest inhabitant of Plymouth never remembered so tempestuous a season. The father of Margaret began to repent of his precipitate step, in bringing his darling child so near to the scene of danger. Yet what could distance have done? If she had remained at her remoter home, she would have heard the contention and roaring of the winds, and her soul would have been shaken

with a thousand terrors. Suspense is often a great aggravation of the most fearful calamity. Here at least with the earliest means she would know the worst.

Every day brought word of vessels foundered, or driven on shore; and the sea-coast was strewed with wrecks. At length intelligence was received of the Roebuck being seen, in the greatest distress, her masts over-board, her rudder gone; and the most vehement apprehension was entertained for her safety. Finally she drifted near the shore; her condition was plainly to be discerned; she fired minute guns; but no boat could venture off to relieve her. You could almost see the countenances of the crew; at least you could observe their attitudes and their despair. The long boat pushed off with as many passengers as it could safely receive, and was at no great distance from the ship, when, from the force

of a new sea, she made a violent plunge and went to the bottom.

Margaret was within sight of this fearful catastrophe. She looked with agonizing alarm at the boat, as at one time it rose to an intolerable height on the giddy wave, and then suddenly vanished out of sight, as if it had been swallowed up by the billows. It drew nearer and nearer, but with an irregular motion. No material accident however interfered with its career. She pushed close under the lee, and the passengers leaped out. They were to the amount of nearly thirty. Margaret had placed herself at a convenient distance, from whence she could observe the figures of the crew, their gestures and their faces. She dared not come nearer; for she began to be oppressed with a doleful presentiment that William was not among them. Her apprehension was but too true. Her gaze became

keener and more keen; probability advanced further and further, till it turned itself into a dreadful certainty; Margaret took her last look, and sunk insensible on the bank. Her father, her mother and a friend who had accidentally joined them at Plymouth, were with her. The old man delivered his daughter into the care of the other two, and charged them to convey her with all practicable speed to the house in which they had resided for the last fortnight. He resolved that he would not himself quit the shore, till by persevering he had obtained all practicable information as to the loss of the ill-fated lover.

At first the unhappy wretches who had just escaped from a watery grave, shook him off with impatience. They were too much disturbed, too much occupied with looking about them, first to the landward, and then to the sea, and then in mourning for the friends, the companions, and the property, that was all

swallowed up in the wreck, to be capable of listening to the importunity of a stranger. Borradale was schooled by the rebuffs he received, and watched for a propitious occasion. He followed them to an inn to which the majority of them retired, and patiently waited till they had called for and taken such refreshments as they pleased. He then fixed on a young man, who drew somewhat apart from the rest, and was otherwise distinguished by an humane and intelligent countenance. Of him he enquired respecting the youth, who had come to Canada only a few months before with colonel Bouverie, and had since embarked on his return on board the Roebuck.

It happened that the person to whom these questions were addressed, was able to give all the information that was sought. He and William, though previously unacquainted with each other, had associated familiarly during the voyage. He said, that William had ap-

peared to be the happiest creature on board. He told his new friend, that he was coming home to be married, that he had been driven to go abroad by the inexorableness and hard-heartedness of the father of her he adored, whose only fault it was to be too submissive to so ill-conditioned a parent; but now every thing was reconciled, and he was recalled by the invitation of him who had occasioned his exile. His raptures in praise of his mistress were inexhaustible. His delicacy however was so great, that he never once pronounced the name of her family, but had only spoken of her by her Christian name of Margaret.

The voyage had passed in the most auspicious manner, till, on the evening of the third day from their catastrophe, and when they had already entered the chops of the Channel, appearances suddenly changed. A sharp wind arose, and the temperature became exceedingly cold. The clouds thickened; and, before morn-

ing, they were involved in all the horrors of a tempest. The tone of William's mind for the first time became changed, and he was filled with melancholy presentiments. Is it possible, said he to his friend, that, now that I am come home to happier prospects than ever, I should be destined never to reach the land? God knows my heart! I do not grieve so much for myself (I know that I must die some time or other, in adverse circumstances or in prosperous), as I do for my beloved, if it is her fate to lose me and survive. I could almost wish (for her sake, not for my own,) that we were embarked in one bottom, and sustained the same fortune. Next to living together, perhaps the most desirable event was that we should have died together.

After having endured all the vehemence of the storm for two days, and it being evident that the ship could not float for many minutes more, the long boat was thrown out. William

was one of the first to rush to the side of the ship where it lay. Life is dear to every one in the moment of extremity; but William had a motive more urgent than any other soul on board; his venture was not merely for his own life, but for the life of one a thousand times dearer to him; nor merely for her life, but for that which only makes life worth the having. He stepped on the edge of the vessel; a rope which no one had observed, at that moment slung violently against him; it destroyed his balance in the very act of quitting the ship, and flung him into the sea. He presently recovered the shock; he swam towards the boat; one of the crew stretched out his hand, and they missed of each other; a wave came up at that instant, and carried him many yards from his point; we saw him no more.

The situation in which Margaret was left by this event was most melancholy. Every obstacle to the wish of her heart had been re-

moved, and she was even courted to be happy in the way of her own choice; when a cruel destiny had in a moment bereft her of the individual, who alone in her apprehension constituted the life of her life. Her prospects were closed. There was nothing that remained for her but a melancholy and cheerless resignation. It was in some sort an aggravation of her lot, that no one now opposed her; all had been eager to unite in one accordant effort to place her beyond the reach of envy, when the elements of nature put forth their might to take from her that, which man was anxious to bestow upon her.

It was by slow degrees that she was able to raise her head from the couch upon which despair had cast her. When she opened her eyes from the insensibility which had fallen upon her, she could not at first recollect what had happened. The truth at length burst upon her. Her agony vented itself in piercing

shrieks. She invoked the names of her father, her mother, her William. She had seen the boat as it landed the few persons who were saved from the vessel. She had viewed the sinking of the ship; and she had seen no more. But her father and her mother could tell her that of which she was ignorant. Her father doubtless had been earnest in his enquiries. Perhaps William had swum to shore. Perhaps some of the crew had saved their lives on empty casks and fragments of the vessel, and he among the rest. If so, why did he not make his appearance to dispel her fears? Was there no hope? What was the final result of all the enquiries that could be made?

The father and mother sought to elude her earnestness, and clothe what they knew with some degree of uncertainty. But she would not be baffled. She pressed to know by her importunate enquiry the worst. She was no longer under the control of filial deference.

The eagerness with which she sought the truth trampled on all diffidence and half-measures, and made her utterly irresistible. In piteous accents she implored them to hide nothing from her. Had even his body been washed ashore, to give the last certainty to the cruel tidings that overwhelmed her?

From this moment Margaret sunk into a deep dejection. Her situation was however very different from what it had been during her brief residence in Yorkshire. That had been a condition of continual struggle that wore out her frame. She had looked forward to a future, which, in spite of all her efforts, was inexpressibly odious to her. Nature and fortune had a strife which should gain the mastery, and she had been constant in her determination to subdue her repugnance; but the weakness of her frame had given way notwithstanding the heroism of her mind.

Now she had no one to contend with: every

one about her was desirous to do all that was in their power to mitigate her sorrows. No attempt was made to revive the proposals of lord Borradale. Those proposals had afforded the signal for the commencement of her calamity. And, since the series of her woes had terminated in the destruction of her lover, those proposals had grown a thousand times more odious and loathsome to her than ever.

Her father, from the time in which he had seen her on the steep descent of a premature decay tottering over the grave, had totally changed his character. He had now no object so near his heart as the preservation of his child. As the idea of an insurmountable barrier to be set up cutting off for ever her union with William had almost destroyed her, both her parents felt that there was every thing to be apprehended in the result of the fearful casualty to which her lover had fallen a victim. They regarded her as a creature to be

saved with the most watchful care. They viewed her as a delicate flower to be sheltered from the blast, and to whose existence every keener breath of heaven was in the utmost degree perilous. They sought to anticipate all her wishes, and to remove every obstacle from her path, "lest at any time she should strike her foot against a stone." They removed her from one watering place to another, trying how far travelling, change of air, and new objects and scenes, might conduce to restore her strength and infuse cheerfulness into her mind.

The efforts of her parents produced a deep effect upon her. She felt how much she owed them; and she would have regarded it as a baseness and a crime, if she had not done every thing in her power to contribute to their gratification, and conduce to the object they desired. It was a memorable contest on both sides, which should make the greatest sacrifice to the other, or most forget themselves in their anx-

iety for the benefit, or consideration for the feelings of the other party. As the calamity that had overtaken her was irremediable, her mind sunk into a sort of hopeless tranquillity, by no means calculated so powerfully or so suddenly to undermine the foundations of human life, as the inward contest between a contrariety of feelings under which she had formerly sunk.

An interval of three years had interposed itself between the catastrophe of William, and the period when I first knew her. She had gradually become resigned to her fate; she endured life as that which it became her to sustain; but she carried a barbed arrow fixed in her heart. She took no interest in any thing, save the welfare of her parents. She considered all that they had suffered on her account; and she thought nothing she could do could ever make them amends. Hourly she regretted that her unhappy state should be a burthen to

them. She was anxious to appear cheerful and contented in their eyes. But she could rise to no higher a virtue than patience; and therefore there appeared in her a perpetual struggle between the shew of mildness and equanimity which she assumed, and the withering consciousness of a disappointment and a sorrow never to be forgotten.

CHAPTER XVII.

From the moment I saw her, I was struck as I had never been with any other woman. She had been resplendently beautiful. Her features were not less perfect than those of the mother of Catherine. The colour had indeed deserted her cheeks; but her complexion was of the most consummate fairness. Her lips imparted the idea of delicacy itself. Her eyes had a mild and languishing effect, which perhaps can never be found in those of a person in perfect health. Her high forehead was as white as alabaster, and was doubly relieved by a profusion of ringlets of dark brown hair. But the main charm of the whole consisted in the mild ex-

pression of a divine resignation. She was like nothing earthly. Human passions seemed extinguished in her; she was among the admired of her sex, but she "was not of them;" you approached her with awe, as if she were descended from the spheres; a figure like hers, if encountered in the days of the fabulous mythology, would undoubtedly have been worshipped as a goddess.

From the moment I beheld her, I was fascinated. I could see no one else; I could look at nothing but her. I had loved before: oh, how dearly loved! but this was a passion of a different sort. She appeared like a fairy vision, like some creature of the elements, compounded of the lily, the violet, and the morning dew, when first the beams of the rising sun exhale sweetness and freshness from the vegetating earth. There was an unreal and an angelic character in her seeming; she looked as if purified and defecated from sublunary gross-

ness, a modification of the air, that would vanish if you approached it too rudely. The mother of Catherine, however beautiful, was a being of flesh and blood, a woman: so had formerly been the fair Margaret. But grief had attenuated, and resignation had sublimed her. She was piety and filial virtue, and nothing else: all meaner things, all imperfection, all that allies us vulgar mortals to sense and frailty, seemed as if they had long ago forsaken her. She was a sylph.

Was it infatuation that my heart was immediately struck with the spectacle of this melancholy maid? My feelings were doubtless in some degree connected with the frame of convalescence in which I now found myself. The world was renovated before me. I had lately in a manner taken my leave of sublunary things: and now unexpectedly I felt the sensations of health returning upon me, and the world clothing itself in all life-giving colours. Meanwhile,

my limbs not being yet restored to their robustness, my tastes and perceptions had in consequence a delicacy which I had perhaps never before known.

I approached Margaret; she did not repel me. She had not been extensively conversant with the world; and she found in me a being more than ordinarily in unison with herself. I was neither like the cold-hearted, mere virtuoso lord Borradale, nor the frivolous, empty coxcomb, his son. The tones of my voice were characterised with a spirit of music; my manners were soothing, prepossessing and gentle. I talked to her of sentiment; I spoke of the wife I had lost. Though I had been more than fifteen years a widower, my recollections were green, my emotions were fresh. There was a certain kindred between my sorrows and hers. She loved me for the purity of emotions, which were of so long life, and had stood the test of time; and I loved her, that she listened to

them with so much patience, and such genuine pity.

But the principal cause of the extraordinary influence which Margaret exercised over my mind, consisted in her sorrows. There are various ways according to which female loveliness and excellence attain their empire over man. Sometimes it is splendid, majestic, faultless beauty, that seems to draw after it a crowd of slaves, who would willingly, but cannot, make themselves free. Sometimes it is a species of beauty, soft, gentle and insinuating, that appears to derive its strength from weakness. Sometimes it is grace of motion and an irresistible carriage, that melts the heart into softness, and imparts ideas of voluptuousness, which subdue the whole man into an entire and passive subjection. Sometimes it is sentiment and sympathy; and sometimes wit that plays about the lips, and flashes a transporting gaiety and a thousand subtle meanings from the eyes.

But sadness had to me a power beyond all these. I should have resisted an imperious beauty, that claimed to draw me a captive at her chariot-wheels. I should have refused to be the victim of the attractions of luxury and voluptuousness. I should have disdained to become the conquest of mere softness and frailty. But I found in beauty, modified by the impressions of grief, something that I could not hold out against. Beauty prepares the mind of man to submit; and pity binds him with an invincible cord. Tenderness is the very soul of love; and, when I looked upon Margaret, I felt a tenderness for her that no words can describe.

Another circumstance which exercised a magic influence over my mind, was the recollection of what she had passed through. The history of the human mind, and the inventions of genius, can with difficulty furnish an instance of so absorbing a passion. The resig-

nation of Margaret served only to illustrate the depth of the feeling with which her heart was penetrated. She could conquer her will; she could yield the train of her actions to the guidance of her father. She displayed an energy and strength of resolution of the most extraordinary cast. But she could not draw out the barbed arrow which was fixed in her vitals. She was hastening to the tomb without a murmur; the all-inclosing air was not broken with the voice of her complaint. But she was dying. Having formed her resolve, she quailed not; she stood as firm and motionless as the pillars which are said to sustain the vault of heaven. But the grave would have closed over her; she would have been gathered to the forgotten things of the world. Nothing could erase from her soul the image of her William; there he stood distinct in all his lineaments; he was the pole-star that marshaled the course

of her thoughts; he was the sun from which the light of her mind was singly derived.

Such had been the feelings of Margaret during her residence in the vicinity of the mansion of Borradale, and for as long a time as she believed that William was numbered in the congregation of the living. There is something exceedingly different in the effect produced upon the human mind by the irreversible decrees of fate, and when the gates of death are for ever closed on our conjectures. We submit to the authority and the harsh edicts of our fellow-creatures, but always with a reserve. The casket they present to us is like that of Pandora: it contains an accumulation of the direst calamities; but Hope is at the bottom. We have still a secret hoard laid up in the mind; there is an uneasy thought, like a living worm, gnawing at our vitals, and suggesting, in spite of ourselves, the imagina-

tion, This is not final; all these things may be reversed. Not so, when death has shut up the scene. Hope, the last possession of the wretched, is then departed. And, strange as it may seem, the heart grows more quiet; its pain becomes blunted and dull; and though happiness, it may be, is farther from us than ever, we fold our arms, and become inert and passive as a statue.

Margaret had passed through these two conditions. In the first she wasted away with a gradual decay; and, had not her father changed his measures, and given way in time, she would have died, a spotless monument of filial submission and obedience. Her present condition was not so critical. There was a pious, a religious resignation in it, that ceased to convulse every fibre of her frame. She was struck, as with a lightning from heaven; but it had nothing in it corrosive and putrifying; it rather seemed to preserve every thing in a state

beyond the reach of alteration. One might compare the beautiful figure that presented itself, to the unperishing remains of the mighty dead of Ancient Egypt; but with this difference, that the mummies we behold are shrunk and withered, an assemblage of bones with a covering, the skin being changed into the appearance of parchment,—while the living figure I saw from day to day in the assembly-room at Harrowgate was of unrivalled beauty, infinitely more dazzling and illustrious than any thing that can be discovered in those customary angelic features, which Death has not marked with the impress of his fatal operation.

When I looked therefore on the person of Margaret, I saw all that love, almighty love, could effect on a human being. She was the temple, in which the god had enshrined himself. She represented to my eyes the image, the sovereignty and empire, of this divine passion. This spectacle produced in me a strange

and most perverse conception, the thought, Oh, that I could be so loved, as William had been loved! There was indeed a mighty obstacle to this. Could his image ever be obliterated from her heart? Were not her powers already used up? Was not the elasticity of her soul worn out by her first passion? No matter! I refused to despair. Here was at least the subject, the living creature originally capable of such things as the multitude of her sex are not qualified so much as to understand. Perseverance might do much; and I resolved to persevere. The difficulties indeed were vast. But proportioned to the difficulties, was the glory of the achievement; or what I valued more, the consciousness I should have that I possessed a prize, such as all the earth could not shew in any other creature.

There was something in the demeanour of Margaret that encouraged this idea. Without declaring myself, my manner and my attentions

became such, as fully to shew to every discerning eye how deeply I was smitten with the pale, the enchanting figure that was placed before me. I was happy enough from the first to find some degree of favour in the sight of the disconsolate mourner. She distinguished me from the herd of those who danced attendance at this scene of apparent gaiety. I sat near her; I spoke to her. My speech was mild, and in harmony with her subdued state of mind. As I said before, her air was abstracted; she seemed scarcely to notice the things around her. But she attended to me. I talked to her, not of those frivolous matters which make almost the sole subject of fashionable conversation. I talked of those parts of England, which we had both of us seen. I talked, without being conscious of it, of those poets and those branches of literature, in which she had been initiated by her lover. She listened to me; she answered me. Her remarks were

indicative of the most perfect taste and the deepest feeling; the tones of her voice thrilled through my heart. The subdued, gentle and low key in which she spoke, the sweet distinctness of her articulation, filled me with rapture. I felt sensations I had never before known, a bliss of a strange character, which, because it was new to me, deprived me of self-government, and carried away my whole soul like a torrent.

I was not slow in opening my heart to the father of Margaret. He consulted his wife. They both of them thought, that, if I could win the favour of their daughter, the happiest result might be expected. They determined, that they would in no sort interfere to direct her will. They had had enough of that. But, if she could be drawn off from the fearful abstraction and quietism into which she had fallen, if she could be induced to form new ties, it might be the cause of a happy revolution within her. She was of so ingenuous a disposition, of

a conscience so perfect and sincere, that she would never enter into so sacred an engagement as marriage (particularly when that engagement, as they resolved should be the case, was entirely her own act), without summoning her whole energies to the discharge of its duties. It was the only chance. She would then be transported into a new world. She would have a husband, servants, an establishment, to occupy her attention. She could not live, as now, only with the extinguished and invisible.

For Margaret, she also, for various reasons, felt inclined to listen to the proposition. She began to be ashamed of her obstinacy and self-will. She felt how much she was indebted to her parents for the indulgence they had shewn her. She resolved not to be an incumbrance on them for ever. She dived into their hearts, and, notwithstanding the entire silence they preserved, saw what it was they earnestly de-

sired. She had been, as it were, an evil genius to her father, the means of cutting off his hopes, disappointing his ambition, and driving him back upon the low estate which had embittered the best years of his life. She thought her submission to the speechless wish which he had formed in this instance, would prove the best expiation she could make for that scene, in which she had so unwillingly been the cause of his griefs.

Beside this, she also began to believe that she ought to consider, that she did not come into the world for herself alone. She had faculties and endowments. She was capable of imparting good and happiness to others. She was the member of a society, a body corporate more or less limited, of human beings. She had the power of doing good to others, and of exhibiting a praise-worthy example. She resolved, that her humble name should be remembered for a certain worthiness, and that it should

not be forgotten by every one that Margaret had existed.

When she began, as I have said, to feel inclined to the proposition I had submitted to her parents, her conversations with me at the same time began to assume a new character. She was still "of ladies most deject and wretched," her heart deeply scarred and trenched with the trials she had passed through, and the sorrows she sustained. But her manner towards me was most fascinating and exquisite. When she saw me, she roused herself. The treatment she exercised towards me, was wholly unlike that she gave to the insects that buzzed around her, unlike that which she gave to her friends. It resembled the demeanour which was to be observed in her to her earthly parents: and yet it was distinct from that. She tasked herself to give me pleasure. She treated me as a person already standing in some relation to her, in consideration of the

relation in which it was probable I might hereafter be placed.

This sort of shadowy, undemonstrative observance had a power that no other mode of conduct could equal. It was like the modulation of the speech of a ghost, who, we are told, even when he reveals the secrets of a world unknown, or lays bare the foulness of the most monstrous crimes, still speaks in a tone, articulate and no more, in words which, while they shake the inmost fibre of our souls, have neither accent nor emphasis, but impress us with the weight of the thing communicated, unclothed with the labour and artifices of speech. It is even thus, if I may farther illustrate my meaning, that action, the gestures of the body, the impatient stamping of the foot, are merely the excrescences and disease of eloquence. They mark that the speaker is not at home, nor fully imbued and penetrated, with his subject. Otherwise he would not indulge in these

ambitious ornaments of discourse, shewing that he is labouring to reach, is working himself up to, the idea and the feeling he would communicate. The highest eloquence is concentred. In it the voice is deeply, not superficially affected, the eye may speak, the muscles of the visage may be convulsed, but the limbs are still. The action of the body, in the estimate of true taste, interrupts the path of a thought, which should proceed straight from the soul of the speaker to the soul of the hearer, to which purpose this restlessness is mere absurdity, and impertinently disturbs the conception, which otherwise would be drunk in with one long draught by him who listens.

I am afraid of not making myself fully understood. My illustrations are inappropriate, but are such as I am able to light upon. Be that as it will, it was thus that Margaret spoke. She was a statue; and by contagion I was turned into a statue. We spoke, not in whis-

pers, for the clear tone of the voice was not disguised, but was uttered in that key, pure, though subdued, which reached the ear of no one but the person for whom it was intended.

Margaret seemed to undergo a metamorphosis and a miracle. The deeply-trenched wound she had received was not healed. Her colour was not restored to her; she was not gay—oh, how far was the sensation of gaiety from the soul of the mourner! But she was all observance, tenderness, and mild devotion. She seemed to be awake to me alone, to see nothing but me. She then only became a living thing, when I approached. The cloud, in which the memory of her William wrapped her, and which hid her beauties and graces from all other eyes, fell off, and was dissipated. Still she was an imagination only, and a memory. Her body was a corpse, if we can figure to ourselves a corpse, void of every thing offending and repulsive, but which on the con-

trary was more beautiful, more ravishing, more celestial, than any living mortal could ever be. For the soul that informed this body, was all delicacy, all sensitiveness, tremblingly alive.

To be the object of the tenderness and attention of so divine a creature, a creature altogether unlike any thing I had ever seen or could figure to myself, was a trance, a removal to the heaven of heavens. I know not how it was: I had loved Emilia, as much, I thought, as woman could be loved. But my present passion was not like what has been described as

> A home-felt delight,
> A sober certainty of waking bliss.

Oh, no! It was "the song of Circe and the Sirens; it took the prisoned soul, and lapped it in Elysium; it lulled my sense in pleasing slumbers, and in sweet madness robbed me of myself."

What I felt on this occasion can be likened to nothing but a transmigration, a being born

again. I was, as Solomon says, even as "a serpent upon a rock," the skin of whose figure has, by length of time and the rudeness of the elements, become knotty and gnarled, with a thousand wrinkles, and pursed into furrows, loose and unfitted to the frame within, but who, by continual friction and rubbing himelf against substances the most capable of resistance, at length detaches and lays aside the deformity which incumbered him, and comes forth glossy and sparkling, and moves free as air and with the lightning's speed. Just as we might suppose such a serpent, unweeting of his former self, and rushing into the joys of a new existence, even such was I.

I lived in the glance and the motions of my new mistress. I turned as she turned, "true as the needle to the pole." Wherever I met her, I saw nothing else. Her motions, which were gentle, and gliding, and made no noise, ravished me. The very air seemed to yield

before her, and to suffer neither removal nor violence, so little did she resemble the creatures of this common earth. Her voice, which was all soul,

> . . . . . came o'er my ear like the sweet south,
> That breathes upon a bank of violets,
> Stealing, and giving odour.

When she opened her lips, I dared not so much as breathe. "Silence was took, ere it was ware." There was a melody in her speech, ten thousand times the more fascinating, because it had a coyness, as if afraid to be heard, a divine sweetness and beauty, and a measured pace, that enabled the hearer to savour it all, without missing its slightest and most evanescent graces.

In a word, never was man so entirely and irretrievably caught, as I was caught. There were no obstacles in our path, and we married. Before this event took place, Margaret a thousand times called on me to consider what I

was doing. She was a being, she said, over whom the Angel of Despair had poured his influences, and who never could be worthy of me. I liked her, she could perceive,—I loved her, if that were the name by which I chose to call what I experienced: and this was all well, so long as the situation retained its novelty. But it was impossible, I could continue to be satisfied. I would find in no long time that I had taken the shadow only, where I had expected the reality of a wife. Her affections were blasted; her heart in the grave. What was there left, that could be entitled to my acceptance?

At the same time that Margaret stated this, she assured me of her resolution, as far as that could be effected, to conform herself entirely to the state upon which she entered. She would not juggle with her vows. Conscious as she should be, that her best services were "stale, flat and unprofitable," and that even at last she could poorly and worthlessly discharge

the duties of that equality and partnership into which I proposed to admit her, she would watch herself unintermittedly, make her life a school, and each evening a shrift. But it imported not, she said: all that she could do would fall far short of what might reasonably be required by me of a wife; and I should questionless repent of the rashness of my proceeding.

I on my part protested, that the frame of my spirit was such as could never experience a change. I felt that within, which had made me a new creature, and would last as long as sense and reason should be continued to me. I was devoted to her, and had no life but in her life, no pleasure but in rendering her incessant attentions, no satisfaction but in her approval.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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